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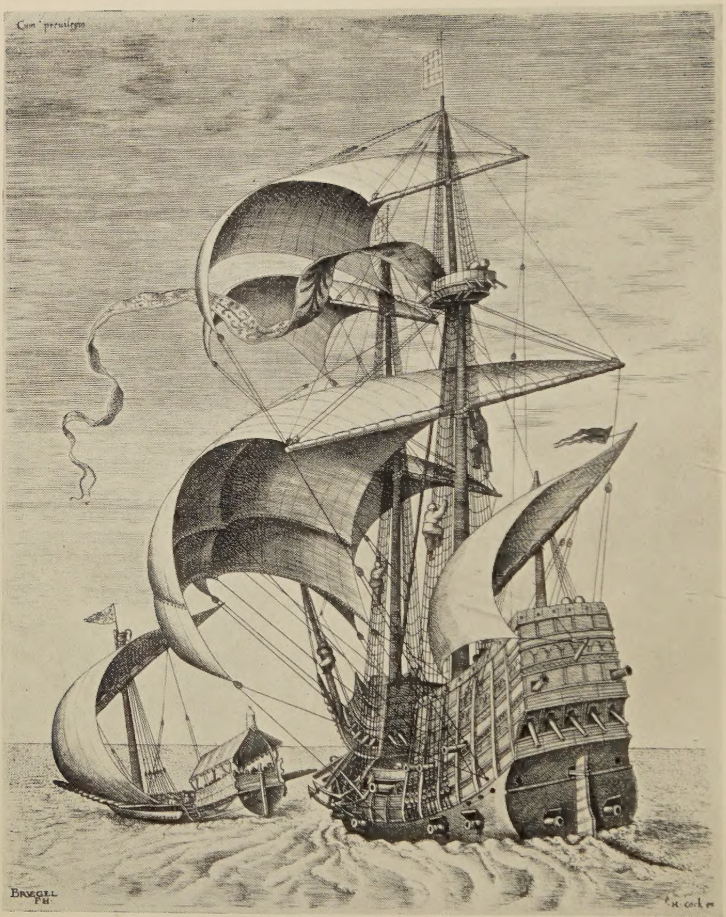
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A SIXTEENTH-CENTURY MAN-OF-WAR

From an Engraving by H. Cock, after the Drawing by P. H. Brueghel

FILIBUSTERS AND BUCCANEERS

BY

ALFRED STERNBECK

TRANSLATED BY

ELIZABETH HILL & DORIS MUDIE

WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS book first appeared in German in 1928. It deals with the romance of piracy from the time when Drake's daring snatched the trident from Philip of Spain and earned him a knighthood until those times when a pirate was rewarded for his heroic deeds with a rope at the execution dock. The stories are based on well-known original sources. If in part the narrators have been made to speak for themselves, this has been done to make the contents more vivid. Only the words have been altered.

A. S.

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FILIBUSTERS AND BUCCANEERS

CHAPTER I

ELDORADO

IN this age of steamships, motorships, and rotorships, the old romance of the sea has vanished. Imagination has been superseded by calculating intellect.

The sea was an awe-inspiring marvel to the sailor of old. He did not know that the earth was round, but thought of the ocean as a liquid chaos, which stretched like the sky into infinite space and concealed unsuspected horrors. Somewhere beyond the horizon the sea flowed in great torrents from an unknown land as high as the heavens. Whirlpools, maelstroms, and all manner of storms made those distant parts unnavigable. In some places the water became as thick as glue and there was no escaping from it. Magnetic hills drew the nails out of the ships' planks, rocks collapsed as boats sailed in between them, and mysterious islands suddenly appeared out of the waters and disappeared again. All these phenomena frightened the ancient mariner, and, added to them, was a world of mythical beings—of tritons, nereids, sirens, dragons, and sea-serpents.

But unsuspected beauty called too from beyond the horizon. For hundreds of years men had been dreaming of the Fortunate Isles. These appeared everywhere, in the far east, in the west, in Ultima Thule, and lured men on through dangers and difficulties into the golden distance. But alas! from the very outset it was no innocent, childish dream, but took on tangible forms. They were seeking gold, silver and jewels. Phantoms of lands of gold held the ancients and the men of the Middle Ages in their sway. All strove towards them, and each one believed he had found the promised land. They all found gold, much gold, but never as much as they would have liked, and farther and farther eastward they were lured by their dreams.

Even Columbus as he set out on his journey across the Atlantic had wanted to reach this magic land of gold, and when he landed in Hayti he believed he was in the place ‘where the Earth was hiding her greatest riches’. Before returning to Spain, he left some of his men and ‘prayed to God’ that on his return from Castile he would find them in possession of a ton of gold and that they would have discovered by then so many gold mines and spices that the King and Queen of Spain would be able to begin their conquest of Jerusalem.

Columbus's real gain in gold was not at all large. He found jewels among the natives and small pieces of gold in the streams, but that was all. Nevertheless, he returned to Barcelona like a Roman conqueror. The King and Queen received him with honour. He gave his report, and concluded by saying that he would pour endless wealth into the Spanish Treasury, as much gold as they could ever want. The crowd cheered, and the King and Queen and all the people fell on their knees to thank God for His golden mercy. The whole of Spain rejoiced.

This booty had now to be politically ensured. Danger threatened, and it was mainly from Portugal, who had a magnificent fleet. Pope Alexander VI, himself a Spaniard, was then approached, and he executed this task on a grand scale. He drew an imaginary line through the Atlantic from the North to the South Poles, one hundred nautical miles west of the Azores, and determined that any land discovered or conquered west of it should belong to Spain and east of it to Portugal. For a whole century this demarcation was observed without dispute, the only exception being that the line was pushed two hundred and seventy miles farther west so that Brazil might belong to Portugal. All other nations were excluded from this blessing of gold, whereby for good or ill the fate of an entire continent was entrusted to Spain.

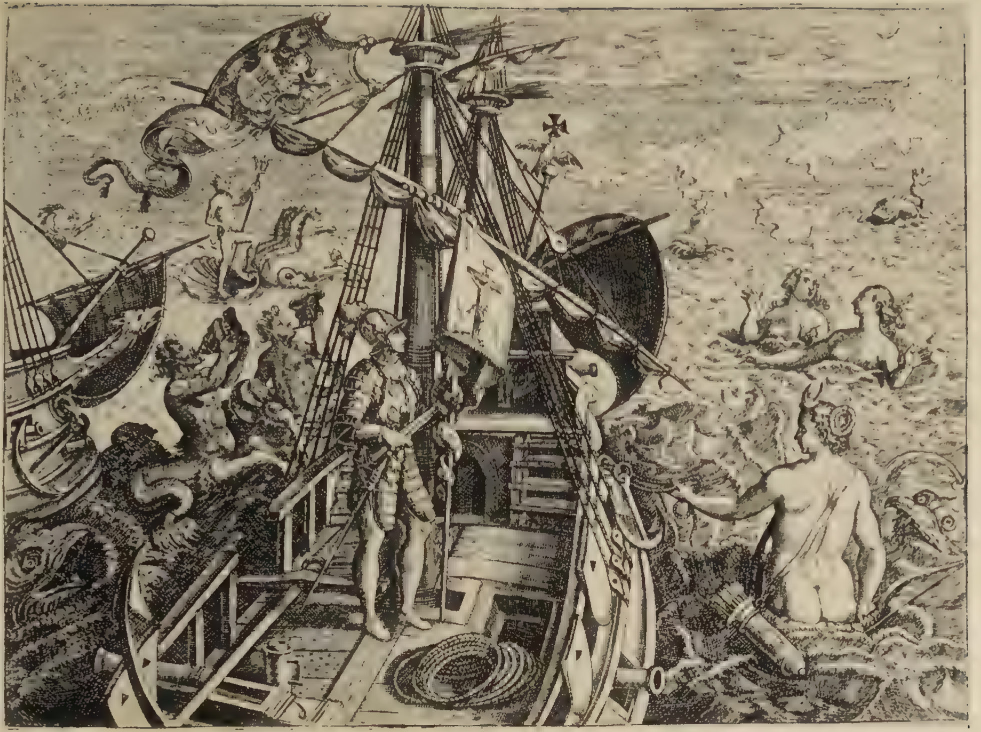
Hayti, or Hispaniola as the island was first called, remained the principal centre of the Spanish colonies, but it in no way proved itself to be the promised Ophir. Instead of the ton of gold he had expected, Columbus found on his second journey that the first settlement, Navidad, had been destroyed, that the men he had left behind had either fled into the bush or were dead, and that the former trusting natives were now suspicious and refractory. The first attempt at Spanish colonization had failed. No doubt the Europeans were to blame, for their greed in dealing with the Indians had surpassed all bounds of decency and reason. The new-comers brought by Columbus on his second journey were, however, no better than the first. Adventurers, soldiers, dissipated students, bankrupt noblemen—all of them had come to mend their fortunes. They had expected to find lumps of gold lying like stones on the ground, and were disappointed to realize that a fortune here, as at home, could only be won by hard work and economy.

Thus life in the new world began with the same distress which the old world had known for centuries. The Indians eyed all these activities with astonishment. At first the strangers had seemed to them to be demigods. They had disputed among themselves the honour to lead and shelter them. They had innocently shown them their gold sources, they had torn their costliest ornaments off their bodies in exchange for European trash. But gradually they saw that the white gods were of the earth earthy. ' See,' cried one of the natives as he held up a lump of gold in the air, ' this is the god of the Spaniards ! '

It was Columbus who began to extort gold taxes from the natives, and those who succeeded him developed methods which made the Spanish colonization notorious. After native risings had been suppressed with bloodshed, which with the advantage of firearms was none too difficult, and after the powerful Indian chiefs had been removed by murder and treachery, the whole population was divided up into so-called *repartimientos*. Each Spaniard received a smaller or greater number of *repartimientos* according to his rank and distinction, and according to services rendered or the price he paid for them. They were placed under him for forced labour and had to produce a certain amount of gold for him and for the Crown. This was nothing else but an evasion of the Interdiction of Slavery. It is easy to imagine the consequences of such a system practised by people far removed from European supervision and living in a fever-ridden climate for the sole purpose of scooping together riches, in as short a time as possible, with which to return to Europe and play the grandee.

As a result of this monstrous pressure on the natives mining operations in Hayti became quite profitable. The number of settlers grew from year to year. Each ship brought more and more gold hunters, who hungered after *repartimientos*; but as they could hardly recover their expenses in Hayti, they moved on to discover other gold-fields. The stream of immigrants turned back to Puerto Rico or went farther west over Cuba and Jamaica to the mainland. Hayti thus became the cradle of the New World. It was from here there set out all those men who filled the age of the Conquista with undying romance. The Conquista was the heroic age of European colonization. Gold had lured men to these parts and remained their guide through suffocating primeval forests and hot prairies. As the Portuguese moved to the east, so the daemon of the Spaniards drew them ever westward until they reached the wide ocean where their eager shouts died away over the waters. Then the stream of treasure-seekers receded to the north and to the south.

After the discovery of Mexico and Peru a new Fata Morgana appeared on the horizon of these lusters for gold. A story was told of a lake consecrated to an Indian god, which lay deep in the primeval forests of Colombia. A tribe of Indians, the richest people in the world, lived on its shores. Each time a new chief was elected they would gather together in a great procession, decked in the gayest of feathers, with jaguar skins on their backs and weighed down with gold and emeralds. The procession would set off to the sound of horns and conch-shells, headed by priests in long black cloaks and high black caps, followed by men of



COLUMBUS ON HIS VOYAGE TO AMERICA

From an Engraving

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the highest rank, and by the high priests, who carried a litter decorated with golden sun discs on which sat the new chieftain completely naked save for a coating of gold dust which was stuck to his body with thick resin. He was the gold man—the *el Dorado.* The procession would halt on the shore. The Dorado then entered a canoe and was rowed into the middle of the lake. There he stood up, stretched out his arms and dived into the waves to wash away the precious dust—his sacrifice to the god of the lake. The crowd on the shore would cheer and make music. At the moment of diving they would tear the ornaments off their bodies and cast them into the lake—hecatombs of gold and precious stones.

This was the legend, and people believed it. Expedition after expedition went into the primeval forests to discover the Dorado, or the Eldorado as he was later called. Actually, the Eldorado was no chimera. It referred to a ceremony of the inhabitants of the Bogota plains in Colombia, which, however, was no longer practised by the time the Spaniards came there. The real merit of these various fairy tales about gold, however, lay in the impulse they gave. They passed from mouth to mouth and often became quite grotesque through exaggeration and credulity. Still, Eldorado, for all its differing versions, brought about the unveiling of a large part of north South America together with the river basins of the Orinoco and the Amazon. It is natural that one or another of these gold legends turned out to be nothing but pure deception. This seems to have been the case with the mysterious land of gold, Quivira, which lured flocks of adventurers to the north as far as the prairies of North America.

Spain had created a mighty colonial kingdom for herself. She possessed the whole of America between the Pacific and the Atlantic, south of the line of Florida-California, with the exception of Brazil, which belonged to the Portuguese. After Magellan's voyage round the world there were also added to it the islands of the South Sea as far as the Philippines on the East Asiatic coast. This enormous territory was divided for purposes of administration into two vice-kingdoms: the first consisted of Peru with the capital Lima, Panama and the whole of South America with the exception of Venezuela; while the second embraced Mexico, or New Spain, the remaining parts of Central America, the West Indies, Venezuela, the Philippines, and North America as far as it was known. This enormous kingdom was composed of twenty-nine provinces, and its size alone shows how little question there could be of any uniform administration in the modern sense of the word. Apart from this the greater part of the colonized territory consisted of coast-land; it was only in Central America and in the old civilized countries of Mexico and Peru that settlement and administration extended inland. Central America remained, as before, the centre of communication of the world, but the centre of gravity shifted from Hayti to the mainland where a number of flourishing seaports had sprung up on the coast between Venezuela and Florida, such as Maracaibo, Santa Maria, Cartagena, Porto Bello, Campêche, and Vera Cruz.

The natural centre of the whole of the New World was Panama, the majestic town on the South Sea, situated in the most favourable position in the narrowest part of the isthmus, between two seas and in the middle of a most productive gold country. Castillo del Oro, the Golden Castle, was what the Spaniards called the east coast, and the rich west coast they called Costa Rica. Yet gold was not the only wealth of Panama, for coffee, sugar, tobacco and cocoa grew on its fertile soil; wide prairies favoured cattle-breeding, enormous primeval forests yielded timber of all sorts, the South Sea threw up on to its shores treasures in plenty, and priceless pearls were fished for on the islands that lay before the town. The place won its greatest importance, however, as a passage port through which the riches of Peru and the whole of the South Sea were taken to Europe. In those days the isthmus could rightly be called the 'Bridge of the World', with its two abutment piers, Panama on the South Sea and Porto Bello on the Atlantic. For a century there had flowed through Panama the gold stream from the temples and palaces of the Incas, silver from the Potosi mines, jewels from the Andes, spices from the Philippines. Small wonder that it did in truth become the metropolis of the New World even though no viceroy was in residence there. Like the city on the Golden Horn, this city by the Golden Castle linked up two halves of the globe, two worlds.

Panama was connected with the east coast by two routes. One led over the mountains at first to Nombre de Dios, but when this proved to be too unhealthy, then to Porto Bello. For hundreds of years the treasures of gold and silver were carried on mules along this route and for this reason it was called the Street of Gold. The other route led to Venta de Cruzes on the river Chagres, along which one could then travel downstream to its mouth, which was guarded by the fort San Lorenzo, and from here by ship to Porto Bello, which was linked up with Europe by a regular sea trade.

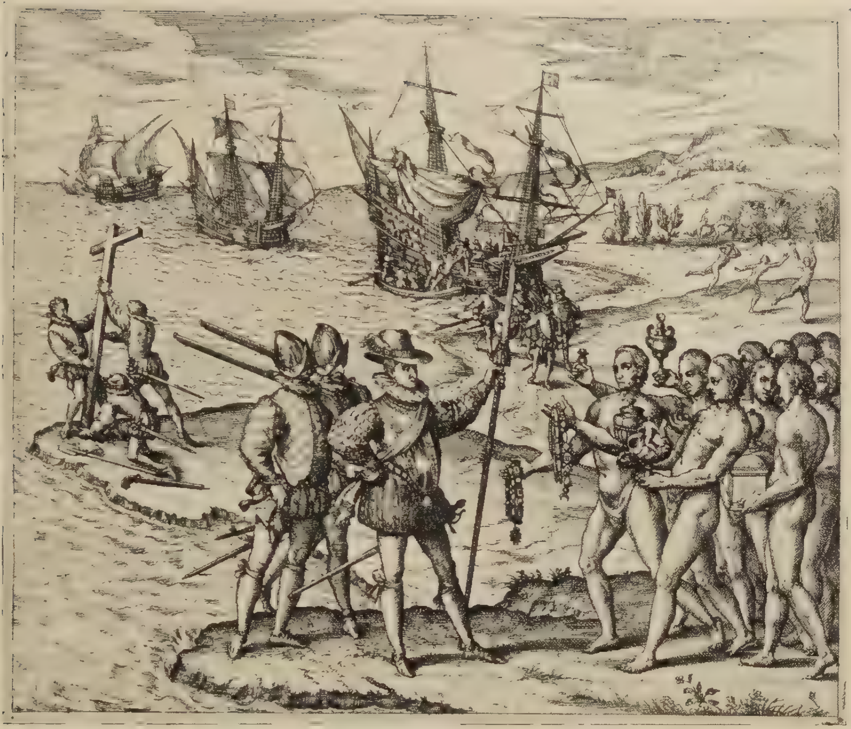
This trade was carried on in the early years of the sixteenth century by single vessels ; soon, however, the French corsairs made these single voyages impossible, and the Spanish Government forbade them under penalty of loss of ship and cargo. Instead of this, two fleets were equipped each year—the Flota and the Galleons. The flota was bound for Mexico and generally consisted of two men-of-war, under the command of an *almirante*, and fifteen or twenty traders. It left Cadiz in June or July and sailed first to the Canary Isles and from there with the trade-wind across the ocean to Guadeloupe. Here they steered their course north-west in among the Antilles, where ship after ship would leave the flota to pass on to her own particular destination, such as Puerto Rico, Hayti, Cuba, and so on. The remaining ships would land in Vera Cruz in September, where they would take on board goods from Mexico or some ten to twelve millions of the King's treasure and then either winter in Cuba or return the same year to Europe together with the galleons. The galleons consisted of a much larger number of merchant vessels under the escort of four to eight men-of-war, under one commander, and a number of *avisos*, the so-called *pataches*. They would generally leave San Lucar for the Canary Isles as early as January or February and from there, like the flota, and often together with it, they would cross the ocean and first put in to Cartagena in Colombia to take on board the products of the provinces of Cumana, Caracas, New Granada and Guatemala, and the yield from the pearl coast. News of the arrival of the galleons would be immediately sent to Panama and from there carried further to Lima, whereupon the South Sea fleet with the produce from Chili and Peru would set sail at once for Panama. The famous gold ship, the *Navio del Oro*, which carried the King's gold from the province of Quito, belonged to this fleet. Then goods would be brought from Panama, often in caravans of three hundred mules, along the aforementioned route, to Porto Bello, where in the meantime the galleons had put in from Cartagena.

And then began the famous Porto Bello mart. This town, which for the greater part of the year was forsaken and avoided as a fever nest except for a few soldiers and mulattos, suddenly became a swarming ant-heap of merchants, seamen, planters, and soldiers. For fourteen days the New and Old Worlds exchanged their treasures, and bars of silver lay stacked on the streets like mounds of turnips. Board and lodging, which at other times could be had here for next to nothing, now became fabulously dear. Many a man, however, had to pay for his short stay with his life, for the 'Yellow Jack' would sweep over the crowded masses with devastating force, so that to many a profit-hungry man Porto Bello became Porto Malo.

Spain had made a good move. At a time when all the other European peoples were being strangled in national or religious strife, she stood politically and religiously united. And just at that moment a gift fell into her lap—the virgin New World. According to all human calculations a rapid development should have begun: Spain ought to have marched at the head of all civilized peoples for all time. But this, as is well known, was not the case.

The reasons for it were manifold, but we are only interested in them so far as they concern the colonies.

The handling of the natives in Hayti showed from the



THE LANDING OF COLUMBUS
From an Engraving

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outset that the Spanish system of colonization carried within itself the seeds of decay. They did not colonize for the future, but carelessly exploited the place. The Cortes and the Pizarros thoughtlessly squandered the inheritance of the cultures of thousands of years. The Indians naturally looked upon every Spaniard as a deadly enemy, and fled from his settlements. The climate was a great obstacle to the building up of European families ; numbers of women and children died. On the other hand, mixed marriages flourished. Black, white, and red skins of all shades abounded. Mulattos, mestizos, sambos, and creoles arose and formed the working and almost the only original part of the population which was not of the same race as the inhabitants of the motherland. The Government endeavoured to prevent this danger by temporary measures. Any leaning towards independence among the coloured people was suppressed by rigorously excluding them from any administration of the law. It was only Spaniards, and then only those born in Spain, who obtained responsible administrative positions.

This upper stratum of the aristocracy, which could only be replenished from the home country, was, however, distrusted and its activities were rendered more difficult by a complicated system of mutual control. Supervisory councillors were appointed to sit with the viceroys at the *audiencias*, and had to be heard by them in all important matters, but they in their turn were dependent on a central authority in Spain, the Indian Council, with whom rested the ultimate decision in administration and justice. This council tested the activities of the governors and *audiencias* through secret agents and occasional surprise inspections. If it was difficult for the colonial administrators to control such an extensive region, then the authorities in Spain, acting without personal observation or experience, must often have passed wrong judgements or, to say the least of it, have been deterred and crippled in making decisions. The centre of gravity of the whole of this system lay not in America but in Europe. The colonies were administered not according to their own needs, but according to the needs of the home country. The harmfulness of this system showed itself particularly in the change which came over colonial expansion and settlement. Whereas State aid was often generously placed at the disposal of the Conquistadors, later this ceased completely. The question of settlement was left to private enterprisers to be furthered at their own expense. They had to commit themselves to a scheme whereby they received a certain quantity of land and had to divide it among a certain number of settlers. The Government even dictated to them the number and type of buildings they were first and foremost to erect, especially churches and the King's treasure-houses. In return they were guaranteed a part of the revenues of the region and the governorship for themselves and their descendants. We can see how it was that the spirit of daring necessarily grew weaker. The love of adventure and romance disappeared. The vigorous captains of the Conquista were superseded by a comfortable bureaucracy, whose energy was wasted in intrigues or disputes over rank and office. They crowded into towns, leaving the management of the land to the coloured peoples. A life of luxury and pleasure developed. The old warrior blood perished. Their mentality weakened. All this had a disastrous effect on the defence of the land. There was a lack of rapid communication between distant settlements, and these very often showed no good will to help each other.

The exploitation of the New World also caused shocking distress. It was rigidly organized, too rigidly, for here, too, all the threads were gathered into one central organization in Spain—the Casa de Contratacion in Seville, a private trading company, which was favoured with the greatest privileges by the Government. It had to control and superintend the entire trade and traffic with the colonies. No ship could sail to America without its permission. It controlled all cargoes, issued all passes and ships' papers, organized the galleons and the flota, conducted the export and import trade, levied taxes and duties and in all questions of commerce possessed the highest powers of jurisdiction, which came into force the moment the ships weighed anchor.

The reason for this rigid control was, as in the case of politics, an endeavour to keep matters firmly and exclusively in their own hands. Colonial trade, like the colonies, was to remain the monopoly of Spain. Only Spanish vessels with Spanish crews, passengers, and goods dared to show themselves in the waters of the West Indies. Those who did not carry papers from the Casa laid themselves open to the heaviest fines. Foreign vessels were sunk.

The application of this monopoly was effected in the same mercenary spirit. Spain wanted to extract as much gold and money as possible out of the colonies. This was achieved by selling their own goods at the highest possible price and buying the colonial raw products at the lowest. The colonies were, therefore, forbidden to produce anything that was cultivated in Spain and, with the greatest lack of foresight, they were encouraged to produce everything which was required in Spain. In this way the vine culture, which flourished in Peru, was destroyed because Spain wanted to sell her own wines. The entire cultivation of cereals in the New World was kept down in spite of brilliant opportunities, simply to give the Spanish farmer his profits. The trades of clothier, dyer, weaver, shoe-maker, and hatter were forbidden in the colonies, so that even the Indians had to buy their clothes from Spain.

This system flourished so long as the gold mines were productive and the Indians could be robbed and enslaved. But as soon as the gold stream began to ebb and the treasures of the Indians to disappear, difficulties arose. The colonists were no longer able to pay the high prices for the Spanish goods. Also, there was a sudden change in Spain. The wars of Charles V and Philip II had swallowed enormous sums of money ; they had destroyed the working class and with it Spanish industry. There came a time when Spain could no longer export her products, but had to keep them for her own needs. Holland, France, England, and Germany had to make up the deficiencies in Spain's production and did this for no mean return. They took payment in wool, silk, timber, indigo, leather, sugar, cocoa, tobacco, and in bars of silver and gold. In this way the proud monopoly of the Casa de Contratacion was reduced to an ordinary carrying trade.

The colonies fared worst of all. Since Spanish agriculture and industry had lost their vigorous export trade, the colonists had to suffer, for their own production of the necessities of life had always been brutally suppressed. Famines and risings broke out, prices soared and there was a lack of everything. Then they came to their own aid. They ignored the carrying-trade of Spain and entered into relations with foreign merchants. Smuggling began. The Portuguese led the dance. They sailed with French, English, and German wares to Brazil and brought these to La Plata through Paraguay overland to Potosi and Lima. Other nations followed suit. Soon the waters of the West Indies were swarming with foreign vessels, which would generally seek out Spanish ports under the pretext of repairing their ships, and then take the opportunity to enter into smuggling relations with the population. The governors, who received a percentage, not only gave their consent, but often enough they would pilot the smuggler into their waters. Of course, the Government did all it could to prevent this mischief, but it was difficult, for Spain did not possess a war fleet which would have been large enough to control such an enormous region.

Smuggling, however, was only a prelude to open piracy. The reports which smugglers brought home of the bearing and position of the Spanish colonies was far more important than contraband. From the time of Columbus to the days of the Casa exact information as to their position or the sailing conditions prevailing there had been kept a secret. Norman, Breton, Basque, and Dutch pirates had long troubled Spanish navigation, but now they enlarged their circle of activity and began to extend their raids right up to the gates of the Golden Castle.

Such raids were repeated with every year. At first it was the French who excelled in them, and the reason for this lay in the eternal wars that Charles V waged against the French Crown. This, however, does not explain everything. The truth was that the Golden West had begun to exert its magic power over other nations. And soon it was the English who laid the greatest claim to it. When Elizabeth came to the throne there were enough men ready to challenge Spain's world supremacy, and from many an English port there rang out to sea the cry of ' Westward Ho ! '

CHAPTER II

SAN JUAN DE ULUA

ON the second of October 1567 a squadron of six ships could be seen near Plymouth, putting out to sea from the rocky coast of Devonshire. They did not cut through the water like the dreadnoughts of to-day, powerful, sinister, and unflinching, but they danced gaily on the waves, light playthings of the winds. Four small sailing vessels headed the procession, heeling at every breeze. Behind them, like ruffled hens after their chickens, followed two four-masters with swelling sails, calm and stately like floating castles. Their stern and fo'c'sle towered up from the water like bastions, the masts with their crow's-nests protected from the wind and weather by tin stood out like belfries, and the ships' sides were like mighty walls with loop-holes and port-holes from which the iron barrels of the cannons protruded menacingly.

The largest of these vessels was a real ' Hansa ship ' the *Jesus of Lübeck*, which Henry VIII had at one time bought from the Lübecker Easterlings. She had weathered many a storm and was no longer considered to be of much use in the navy, but she was still an imposing sea-dragon of 700 tons with 64 guns and 180 men. The second large ship, the *Minion*, had only half her tonnage. The others, the *William and John*, *Swallow*, *Judith*, and *Angel* were small barques and brigantines.

They sailed out towards the west.

Captain John Hawkins, the commander of the squadron, was on board the *Jesus*. It was not his first voyage. He had been across twice before and had knocked at the door of the Castle of Gold, not as a French corsair with murderous weapons and the torch of war, but as a respectable merchant carrying such a good article as black men. The slave-trade in those days was nothing to be ashamed of, and it ensured enormous profits, for the negro was as necessary as bread in the West Indies and the highest prices were paid for him. But it was professional smuggling, for foreign ships were strictly prohibited from putting in to port or trading in the Spanish colonies. Hawkins, however, was just as good a merchant as sailor and knew his customers inside out. He usually sailed first to Teneriffe where a Spanish friend conspired with him to find pilots for the West Indies and was able to give him much valuable information. From here he sailed to the African coast where a few hundred negroes were soon collected. To save time these were for the most part captured from Portuguese slave-dealers. Then off they would sail to their market. Once there, Hawkins did not as a rule need to wait very long. His friend from Teneriffe had paved the way for him. Sometimes the Spaniards refused to trade and then Master Hawkins used to help matters forward with gentle force, but he never allowed his forceful measures to appear to be too serious. He made the oppressed governors provide him with a certificate of good conduct, which he showed to his Government in London as a sign of his harmless intentions. Such testimonials were, however, scarcely necessary, for Hawkins had a syndicate of London capitalists behind him, amongst whom were the most influential men at Court and even the Virgin Queen herself. But the Spanish Ambassador, De Silva, who on occasion would protest most firmly, had to be shown these papers that he might see everything was in order. He was not so easy to convince, but he never received tangible evidence. The real object of the present voyage was brazenly and cleverly hidden by Hawkins and his supporters. The Spaniard had seen with his own eyes how the ships lying in the Thames had been armed from the arsenal. But he was immediately pacified when he learnt they were intended for an expedition against the Portuguese in the East Indies. By the time he saw through the ruse the bird had flown and was sailing gaily down the Channel, her beak towards the Golden West.

At the beginning of the voyage the weather was excellent.

The steep cliffs of Brittany sparkled in the setting sun—cliffs on which the hopes of many a proud sailing ship had been shattered. The vessels sailed past without danger, the small ones leading to windward of the *Jesus*, with whom they had to hold daily conversation by flag signals. Moreover, the old slave-hunter had given them exact sailing instructions, which concluded with the golden words: ' Serve God daily, love one another, preserve your victuals, beware of fire and keep good company.' Most of the dreaded Bay of Biscay was left behind in sunshine, but from Cape Finisterre the devil was let loose. The storm raged for four days, tore away the fly-boats, which were being towed at the ship's stern, and scattered the squadron. The oldest vessel, the *Jesus*, was so badly damaged that Hawkins altered his course back to Plymouth to carry out repairs, but the next day sunny weather set in, the wind changed and the voyage was continued. The *Judith* and the *Angel* were the only other survivors, which in the case of the *Judith* was not surprising as her captain, young Francis Drake, came of the best seafaring stock. He was a cousin of Hawkins, who well knew what he was about when he entrusted the command to this youth of twenty-two. The other ships had vanished. A few weeks later, the *Jesus*, the *Judith*, and the *Angel* put in together at Teneriffe, where they heard that the other ships had anchored off Gomera, a small island south-west of Teneriffe. Here Captain Hawkins met his followers again, took in water and sailed for the African coast to begin his slave-hunt.

The expedition was not very successful. Some Portuguese carvels were taken, but did not yield many slaves. And a raiding expedition on land instead of producing negroes only gave the Englishmen bloody heads. Hawkins himself was wounded by a poisoned arrow, which nearly cost him his life. Disease and death reduced the crews, the ships suffered from the ravages of the storm, and the captain had almost reluctantly decided to give up the enterprise when luck came to his aid. A native chief, who was at war with a neighbouring tribe, came to Hawkins to ask for his support.

Hawkins agreed and helped to such good purpose that 250 blacks—men, women and children—fell to his share. The expedition had been justified. Apart from this a fine Portuguese ship, the *Gracia de Dios*, fell into his hands. He added her to his squadron, as life on board the small vessels with so many black companions was beginning to be unpleasant for his own sailors. In February these four strange messengers of salvation, the *Jesus*, the *Judith*, the *Angel*, and the *Grace of God*, and the others with their unchristian cargo shaped their course towards the west.

After an unusually stormy passage of fifty-five days the squadron sighted the island of Dominica in the Lesser Antilles, where trading was at once begun and was carried on from place to place as far as the mainland. Then they sailed along the coast towards the north. A warning had no doubt been issued by the Spanish Ambassador and a strict order given by the Spanish Government that they were not to have any dealings with Hawkins. But for a long time past the colonists had not taken such instructions seriously. They needed workers, and the Englishman's slaves were cheaper than those of the Casa de Contratacion. The Governor in Rio de la Hache protested against the traffic, whereupon 200 men landed and forced him to be tractable. There was also some resistance in Cartagena, but as Hawkins had only fifty slaves left it was not worth a fight. Still, he bombarded the town and allowed a few sailors to land, who plundered a cellar full of Malmsey wine and sack and left in return a few bales of wool on the shore.

It was now July, and as Hawkins knew the Gulf of Mexico was notorious for its storms in the months of August and September, he did not want to expose his ships to this danger. He therefore turned homeward and steered over the course he knew, along the Gulf Stream through the Straits of Yucatan, westwards, past Cuba. Scarcely had he left the island behind him than he ran into a hurricane, which tossed him about for four days. The *William and John* ran aground and was lost. The disabled *Jesus* survived. Her rudder was broken, her decks were cleared of everything, even of the masts, and above all she was leaking like a sieve. It was out of the question to cross the Atlantic with her in this condition. As the weather improved, the fleet searched for a harbour on the coast of Florida where they might repair the damage. But the waters were too shallow. Hawkins was then forced to make a dangerous decision. He sailed towards San Juan de Ulua to repair his ships there. This was the harbour of Vera Cruz and the export harbour for Mexico, which was connected with Spain by the regular traffic of the flota.

He was most astonished to find, as he came in sight of the place, that the harbour was unusually full of ships, He could count no fewer than thirteen large sailing vessels, which had all hoisted their flags. The shore was swarming with people, who waved enthusiastically to him. Soon a boat set out from the shore. As it approached they saw that several of its occupants were high Spanish officials, who saluted him with great respect. They came on board, but no sooner had they done so than their faces fell. The matter was soon explained. The harbour was waiting for the flota and Mexico's new Viceroy, Don Martin Henriquez, was expected to be on board. These gentlemen had come in all their splendour to welcome him. Instead of him they were horrified to see before them the dreaded English smuggler. They were indeed in a terrible position. Not only were they in his power, but the whole of the export wealth of Mexico lay in the harbour, the result of a year's work, and, apart from this, many millions of gold and silver for the King of Spain. It was impossible to think of resistance at that moment because of the Englishman's superior strength. Hawkins had only to stretch out his hand and the vast treasures were his. Such thoughts must have no doubt crossed Hawkins' mind. But the risk seemed to him too great. The fate of his whole country was in the balance, and at that time England was at peace with Spain. He had to admit that his Queen would hardly countenance such plunder. Besides, it was doubtful whether he would have been able to bring much of the treasure home in his leaking ships. He therefore reassured the gentlemen at once and explained that he only wished to buy victuals and repair his ships, which had been damaged by the storm. Would they give him permission to lie in the harbour? Their faces cleared immediately. They eagerly agreed and were glad to return to shore unscathed, where they spoke with horror of their disillusion.

Hawkins was no less worried. The flota might appear at any minute and he knew very well that its numbers had been considerably increased because of his expedition. At least two good men-of-war of the newest type were escorting them and twelve galleons had been launched only a short time ago, while his own ships were anything but fit for action.

He surveyed the harbour. It was a small roadstead in a bay, open towards the north, and behind a narrow sandbank that served the harbour as a natural mole against the open sea, which was particularly strong here on account of the north winds. It was protected on the inner side by a wall to which iron rings were fixed for mooring ships, where they could lie in deep water and in complete safety. On each side of the bank there were entrances, of which, however, only one could be used for large ships and even then it was so narrow that it could easily be controlled by a few cannons.

Hawkins saw that he could not anchor outside the harbour. The next storm would certainly drive him ashore. If he wished to work in peace he would have to remain in the roadstead. On its other side he would fall into a trap as the incoming flota could easily blockade him. Nevertheless, he rapidly made up his mind. He trusted to his good luck and skill, and gave the order to enter. One ship after the other steered through the narrow opening and anchored close to the inner mole. He protected himself against all emergencies by sending a messenger at once to Mexico to explain his arrival and plans to the Government there and to ask for orders to be given that there should be on encounter between him and the expected flota.

All this happened on Thursday the 26th of September. On Friday morning a number of ships were reported out at sea.

It was the flota.

Hawkins' position was critical.

He had to act promptly, so he immediately seized the island. He placed a number of guns in position at the entrance to the harbour so that he could use these in case of emergency. He did not doubt for a minute what the captains of the flota thought of him: to them he was no more than an ordinary smuggler and pirate.

Then he said to himself: 'I am between two fires and I must face one of them. Either I must see that the flota remains outside, which with God's help I may succeed in doing, or I must let them come in and be prepared for treachery. If I keep them out they may run aground, which would mean a loss of six millions to Spain for which I should not be able to account to the Queen. It is, therefore, better to avoid this certain danger and to risk the Spaniard's treachery, which is only problematical, and which I can perhaps avoid by cunning.'

So he remained quietly in the harbour, and waited to see how matters would develop.

Meanwhile, the flota had anchored three nautical miles off the coast. The leader, Don Francisco de Luxan, and the Viceroy, Don Martin de Henriquez, who actually was on board, were as much in doubt as the Englishman. Of course, they knew who it was who was preventing them from entering. They had been warned about Hawkins in all the harbours where they had cast anchor. Also it was not very flattering for the new Viceroy to be prevented from taking possession of his kingdom by an English smuggler. But he did not dare to risk a direct attack.

They watched each other for a time.

At last a boat with a white flag steered towards the harbour. Within hailing distance, the question rang out:

'Who are you and what do you want in our King's harbour?'

Hawkins replied:

'We are Englishmen and we want to buy victuals. If you can supply us with the same, you may come in. We will then sail out to the other side.'

The boat then went back. Presently it returned with a fresh report from Don Martin :

' I am the Viceroy and I have a thousand men with me. They will see to it that I enter.'

To which Hawkins replied :

' If you are the Viceroy, I am the representative of the Queen of England and I am just as much a Viceroy on my ship as you. And if you have a thousand men with you, we have powder and shot for them, which are not to be despised.'

Negotiations were carried on in this friendly strain for some time.

But the danger of the north wind made the Spaniard more tractable. Don Henriquez began to waver. In every harbour he had been told of the good behaviour of the English. He therefore invited Hawkins to name his conditions, which both sides would faithfully carry out on their oath.

The Englishman had been waiting for this and he made his terms. He should be allowed to trade freely and in addition be given time to overhaul his ships. As a guarantee for his safety, he should be allowed to remain in possession of the sandbank where his guns stood and no armed Spaniard should be allowed to land. As a counter guarantee some gentlemen should be exchanged as hostages.

These conditions did not suit Don Henriquez, but time pressed and Hawkins would not give way. The agreement was therefore concluded and confirmed by the signature and seal of both parties. A flourish of trumpets announced its acceptance. The hostages were exchanged.

As the flota passed through the entrance, flags were hoisted and salutes fired from both sides. The captains exchanged visits and the ships saluted each other.

The Spaniard wanted at first to anchor among the English ships. Hawkins, on the alert, prevented this and made his squadron draw closer together so that the nationalities lay separately at anchor by the mole. The English ships faced the entrance, the *Minion* first, then the *Jesus*, and then the rest. There they lay, secure and safe, sterns anchored in the roadstead and bows to the earth-wall so that the jibs hung over the quay.

There was complete accord for two days. Hawkins made purchases and the repair work went on apace. Officers and men moved about unhindered. They made merry in the taverns, they fraternized and drank the health of both monarchs.

On the third day the English noticed a general activity among the Spaniards. The place swarmed with new soldiers. Boats moved from ship to ship taking troops on board, as well as chests and bundles which appeared to contain arms. All cannons of the galleons seemed to be trained on to the English ships. Hawkins was on his guard. As he saw some guns being taken on to the island and put into position in a suspicious way, he sent a messenger to the Viceroy and asked for an explanation, since this was an obvious breach of the treaty.

The latter had the cannons removed at once and reassured Hawkins of his best intentions.

Hawkins pretended that his fears were set at rest, and as it happened to be time for the midday meal, he invited the hostages to join him. He then realized that instead of gentlemen, as arranged, they had sent ordinary sailors. A dagger was even discovered on one of them. They were immediately put in irons and made prisoners.

Hawkins now sent his bos'n to the Viceroy with a renewed protest. He did not return.

The treachery had become a certainty.

Hawkins then went on deck to give his orders. He saw at once that the hull of an enormous transport ship, which had been lying not far from the *Minion*, was approaching her and apparently trying to board her, while the crew of the *Minion* were making desperate efforts to ward her off.

At the same moment a clear trumpet call rang out from the Viceroy's ship.

An infernal noise arose.

Shrill cries came from the shore where some English sailors rushed out of the houses and were either struck down or threw themselves into the water to swim back to their ships. Strongly manned boats pushed off from the shore.

Commands and orders rang out on all the Spanish ships. Their decks filled with soldiers and sailors, who ran to their places.

There was a rattle of musketry, and bullets whistled among the surprised Englishmen.

The cannons boomed out from the galleons and the shore at one and the same time. They were all trained on to the unfortunate *Jesus* and her companions. At such short range the result was indescribable. Masts and yards crashed on to the deck in disorder. The ships' sides burst asunder. Glass broke, cordage and tackle became entangled, and in a short time everywhere was full of smoke and the smell of gunpowder.

A crowd of some 300 Spaniards rushed out of the fatal ship's hull over on to the deck of the *Minion*, and struck, thrust and fired on to the fleeing crew.

Hawkins kept his head in all this uproar and gave quiet orders. He had the *Jesus* brought close to the *Minion* and gave the command :

'For God and St. George ! At the traitors ! Save the *Minion* !'

With the courage of despair, the English fell upon the Spaniards and in a short time cleared the ship. As men fell into the water it spurted up and was dyed with their blood.

At the beginning of the fight Hawkins had given the order to cut the ropes, but the ships only came afloat slowly. The gunners, who were in possession of the island with the guns, were thus cut off. All the fury of the Spanish soldiers, who had been landed in full force, was directed against them. They were all killed. Young Drake was the only one who managed to reach his ship. She was already afloat, but he caught the bowsprit and swung himself on deck.

The *Jesus* moved away with the greatest difficulty. The transport ship from which she had just rescued the *Minion* blocked her way and two other Spaniards tried to ram and board her. However, the crew hacked, thrust, and shot their way through and brought the ship into the middle of the roadstead where the *Minion* was lying. There was now a space of about three ships' lengths between them and the Spaniards. Everything on the decks was in a state of disorder. The mizen-mast of the *Jesus* was shattered and the main-mast was riddled with shot. A tangled mass of ropes and sails hindered defence or manœuvres. Nevertheless, there was a moment of recuperation. The advantage gained by the English guns had now to be turned to account.

Hawkins had a tankard of beer brought from the cabin and drank to his men.

'Now, then, boys, to the guns! We'll show the rascals!'

But as he lifted the tankard to his mouth, it was struck out of his hand by a bullet and the beer splashed on to the deck.

'Never fear!' he cried. 'God, who saved me from this shot, will rescue us from these traitors.'

And then they set to work. From her guns, culverins and falcons the *Jesus of Lübeck* spat death and destruction at the galleons. First the Viceroy received his share. A bullet hit his powder magazine and one side of his ship flew up into the air. The other flagship was soon in flames. A couple of merchant-ships were also sunk.

But the enemy was too numerous. They were now firing from the island with the guns they had seized from the English. That was decisive. Hawkins cursed that his men had not spiked the cannons before they died. Shot rained down on to the English squadron from all sides and particularly from the flank. Shot after shot pierced the planks and rigging. The *Angel* sank, the *Swallow* was lost. The *Judith* and the *Gracia de Dios* succeeded in getting away from the firing and passed out of the harbour. In doing this, the *Gracia* lost her main-mast through a shot and ran aground. Her crew set fire to her and then rowed over to the *Jesus*.

The latter in the meantime had become a complete wreck. The old Hansa ship was at her last gasp. Of her proud masts only the splintered stumps remained. Her cabin was smashed and her hull was riddled with bullets.

Hawkins had her placed athwart the *Minion* to serve as a butt, and gave orders to transfer her cargo to the latter. Drake also had to come back into the harbour to take some of the freight and crew on board.

All this had to be carried out under the enemy's fire. There was an incessant crashing and smashing.

The fight raged all the afternoon.

Towards evening the firing ceased. But a new danger arose.

The Spaniards sent out two big fire-ships towards the English, which now advanced in bright flames.

A panic broke out on board the *Minion*.

'Let the *Minion* go!' rang out on the ship.

A few cool-headed ones, who thought the wind would drive the fire-ships past them, kept quiet.

'Let the *Minion* go!'

The sails were already hoisted. The ropes were quickly loosened from the *Jesus*, and without the captain's orders off went the *Minion*. At the last moment Hawkins only just managed to jump on board. Every one on the *Jesus* who was still able to run threw himself into a boat and followed the runaways. The wounded, the hostages, the faint-hearted and most of the valuable cargo, particularly the victuals, were left behind on the *Jesus*, and soon after the fire-ships sailed harmlessly by.

The *Minion* remained some distance away, with the *Judith* next to her, and they were more or less unmolested during the night. Hawkins viewed his situation with horror and looked gloomily towards the place where a few hours earlier his proud fleet had stood. The Spaniards were now ransacking his flagship and killing the wounded.

As a land breeze arose, the English sailed slowly out to sea.

Her masts splintered and her sails all tattered, the *Minion* floated listlessly on the sea like a bedraggled swan.

Drake's small sailing ship, however, was in the best condition. It had eluded the Spaniards, probably on account of its size, and had taken practically no part in the fight.

Soon darkness veiled the place of destruction. Only the flames on the burning ships flickered up and down and cast a sombre glow over the shore and waves.

The next morning the *Judith* was not to be seen. Had Drake lost his way or had he sailed out to the open sea? Hawkins thought the latter. He had no time, however, to give himself up to thoughts. The north wind began to blow and with it arose the danger of their being hurled back into the inferno. But how could he tack with his damaged ship? He dragged along for another nautical mile to a small island, where he made fast with the only two anchors and ropes they had left. The wind rose to a gale and strained for two days at the anchor ropes, which he expected to come loose at any minute and run the ships aground.

But the hurricane prevented the Spaniards from pursuing them.

'God is protecting us!' Hawkins encouraged his men.

And when the weather changed, they put out to sea again, without knowing where they were going. It would have been madness to sail across to Europe. There were two or three hundred men on board and only a very meagre supply of water and victuals which would soon be used up. Then they would either have to starve or eat each other. This terrible certainty made some of them decide to return to San Juan and surrender to the Spaniards. Others suggested they should search for an Indian settlement. Others, again, wanted to risk the crossing to Europe at all costs. Necessity demoralized their discipline. They fought and quarrelled. Hawkins had to gather all his strength to enforce work and obedience. He also had to economize with the victuals. They had to eat anything that could be chewed—rats, mice, dogs, and all sorts of creatures they had collected to take home, such as monkeys, bats and parrots.

They cruised aimlessly about for two weeks. The ship leaked and the exhausted men were hardly able to bale out the water. Then about one hundred of the crew peremptorily insisted on being put ashore, where they could try to work their way through. Hawkins had already thought of something of the kind and steered towards the coast of Mexico where he cast anchor at random. But those who had made the decision changed their minds and wanted to stay on board. Without hesitation, the captain took matters into his own hands and decided upon those who would have to remain on the ship because of their positions and duties and ordered the others to make up their minds as to who wanted to remain behind. After a long discussion 112 men preferred to land. Hawkins gave them money, some cloth and his usual pious counsel to serve God and love one another. He also promised them that if he landed safely in England he would come back for them. He then let them get into the boat. A heavy sea made embarkation difficult. In spite of this, the first load reached the shore safely. The second time, however, they did not dare row the boat right up to the beach. A brutal bos'n made the unfortunate wretches get into the water and the men had to reach the shore by swimming and wading through the swell of the heavy seas. Two of them were drowned.

The *Minion* then set out on her homeward voyage after sailing through the straits of Florida and safely reached the Atlantic. There followed a time of unparalleled suffering. The victuals were already insufficient, but each week the rations had to be reduced, for unfavourable winds drove them out of their right course. A few of the men literally starved, the others were so weak and ill that they could scarcely do their work on the ship. After an uninterrupted voyage of nearly three months they landed at last among their mortal enemies in the small harbour of Pontevedra, on the coast of Galicia. They immediately gorged themselves with meat and drink and became ill. Several more died. The Spaniards were on the alert, and Hawkins thought it advisable to sail away quickly. At last, some English ships in Vigo allowed him a handful of sailors, who brought them to Mount's Bay, Cornwall, on the 25th January 1569.

'If all the miseries and troublesome affaires of this sorrowfule voyage should be perfectly and throughly written, there should neede a painfule man with his pen, and as great a time as he had that wrote the lives and deathes of the Martyrs.' And with these words Hawkins ends his brief account of the expedition.

CHAPTER III

DRAKE'S MAY VOYAGE

SAN JUAN DE ULUA was no page of glory in the history of the Spanish Navy. Not so much on moral grounds, for Hawkins and his men were no angels, but principally because one more mouse had escaped from the trap.

On the 20th January 1569 the *Judith* and her half-starved crew put into Plymouth. Her captain left at once for London, to present his report.

Five days later the *Minion* appeared, and throughout England there raged a storm of indignation.

Spain had long been considered England's mortal enemy. She had the sea and the colonies in her power, which were coveted by the English for natural reasons. She was the place of refuge of the darkest Middle Ages and the ruler of the Continent, from which the Reformation had set England free. She wanted at all costs to force her heretical daughter Britain back into the lap of her Church. She was powerful enough to do this. Her Eldorados seemed to provide her with inexhaustible wealth, and her methods were merciless. Ever since Las Casas scandals about her barbaric ways of colonization were on every tongue, and since the days of Bloody Mary the horrors of her Inquisition were fresh in England's memory. Devout Protestants looked upon her as if she were the harlot in the Apocalypse, 'that sitteth upon many waters, arrayed in purple and scarlet colour and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication'.

But so far matters had not come to open enmity between the two countries. They knew in London that the threads of a conspiracy against the life of Queen Elizabeth were gathering in Madrid; they also knew of the secret schemes of Philip with Mary Stuart and were not deceived by the fact that Alba was on the point of leaving the Netherlands, but as yet the risks were too great.

To think that in a time of peace hundreds of English sailors should have been killed, tortured and imprisoned, four good ships with arms and cargo captured or wrecked, hard-earned gains stolen, and in addition a considerable loss of prestige and dignity! The invaders of San Juan de Ulua were the heroes of the day. Their heroism was applauded, and the Spaniards were only looked upon as cowardly traitors.

The first thing that the English Government did was to seize some Spanish ships which were to carry gold, arms and munitions to the Netherlands; the next was to consider war as inevitable. They strengthened and reorganized the fleet. And the third was that Elizabeth now, more than ever, supported all enterprises which were directed against Spain's power at sea. A change therefore took place in the character of these enterprises. If Hawkins could pass as an honest trader, who at least outwardly carried on a respectable trade, his followers fell completely into the wake of the French corsairs. From now on it was only a question of robbery and booty, of retaliation for harm done, and of liberating their oppressed fellow-believers. Piracy was no longer an offence against the Spanish traitor, it was a duty. This was preached from the pulpits and expressed in popular songs. A number of fugitive Huguenots, Dutch fighters for freedom and English Protestants, sea-members of the League of the Gueux, banded together and made unsafe the routes along which the Spanish fleet sailed to and from the Netherlands. Their lurking-place, Dover, was under the very eyes of the English Government, and they were the terror of the galleons and the Spanish coastal towns.

At this time Francis Drake's star was in the ascendant.

After his landing and his presentation in London, the young captain disappeared from the public eye for a time, and it was said that the Queen had put him into prison for having left his cousin Hawkins in the lurch in his hour of need. His behaviour in this matter was, to say the least of it, surprising, but it is idle for us to inquire at this date into the reasons for it. Whatever they were, judging by all his later actions, he was not the man to desert a fellow-countryman in danger. Probably he had disapproved of his cousin's blind confidence from the very beginning. From his early youth he had thought of Spain as a deadly enemy, from whom everything was to be expected, for since the time of Henry VIII his family had been Protestant and had suffered the most terrible persecutions for the sake of their faith. In the confusion which followed upon the death of the King, they had been compelled to give up their property at Tavistock, in Devonshire. For years Drake's father together with his wife and twelve children, of whom Francis was the eldest, had roved about homeless, on an old hulk which he trailed from harbour to harbour, earning a scanty living as ship's preacher on the south coast of England. He was in constant anxiety for himself and his family, for he had seen so many relations and fellow-believers either hanged or burnt. Francis, as eldest, had to earn his living at an early age. He went into service with a seaman. It was a difficult apprenticeship in the 'narrow seas', but such a life hardened a man. The youth did well, so well that his master, an old bachelor, left him when he died the boat where he had learnt his trade. It was then that Elizabeth came to the throne, and matters improved. Drake's father became Vicar of Upchurch, while he, young though he was, made a small fortune with his ship. He probably sold the vessel, and then encouraged by Hawkins put the money into expeditions, the last one being to San Juan de Ulua, which had failed so ignominiously. All his money was swallowed up by it, and once more he had Spain to thank for it. Still, he did not depend upon useless complaints and State intervention, but considered his relations with Spain as a purely personal matter. King Philip had stolen his property; he, therefore, wanted to get it back, and, indeed, with compound interest. So from the very beginning he was a man with a clear aim, who scorned Hawkins' trader's mask and entered the lists as an undisguised Viking. . . .

One evening, just before Whitsuntide 1572, two ships sailed out from Plymouth. The green boughs swayed merrily in the fresh breeze over the swelling sails, gay music sounded from on board, and the last farewells floated towards the vanishing shore. Those who sailed out on that sunny evening were as fresh as the may, none of them over thirty except for one Nestor who, however, was only fifty. The captains were Francis Drake and his brother John, and their respective ships were the *Pasha* and the *Swan*. They were certainly not big—the *Pasha* of seventy, and the *Swan* of only fifty tons—but they were carefully fitted with artillery, small arms, munitions and victuals, enough to last them for a year. They also had on deck materials for assembling three pinnaces, which led them to envisage daring schemes.

They took the usual course to the Canary Isles, and, without putting in there, sailed across the Atlantic with a good wind behind them until they sighted the sheer blue coast of Guadeloupe. On a rocky island between Guadeloupe and Dominica they cast anchor for the first time, but three days later they sailed on again to the mainland, where they searched for a harbour which Drake had discovered on a previous voyage. It was only with difficulty that they found the hidden bay, a corner of marvellous tropical beauty, in which impenetrable virgin forests stretched down to the shore. It was an ideal refuge for pirates, and this was just what it was meant to be, for this time Drake had an ambitious scheme in mind. It was nothing less than an attack on Nombre de Dios, the eastern outgoing harbour of Panama, where the riches of America were gathered each year to be transported to Spain in the galleons. He knew that if he succeeded in emptying the treasure-houses there before the ships arrived, then he would really have set Philip of Spain at defiance as no one else had ever done. It was a bold adventure, dependent on foolhardiness and speed. He would have to carry it out before a single Spaniard had any idea that he was in the West Indies. Also he would have to find a place of shelter after a successful raid, so as not to lose his booty again, and it was for this that the hiding-place was wanted. Drake allowed his men a few days' rest and then ordered them to build a fortification close to the shore so that he might have a defensive position. It was made of enormous tree-trunks and concealed under earth and foliage. The pinnaces were then assembled and the adventure began.

After three days' sailing north-west along the coast they reached an island overgrown with pines. Here they seized a few negroes from Nombre de Dios, from whom they obtained little comforting news ; the galleons had not yet arrived and the town was full of treasure, but it was well protected and more troops were arriving daily from Panama, for, apart from pirates, the Spaniards had another enemy to fear in their own land. These were escaped negro slaves called maroons. In the course of time entire colonies of them had come together in the woods, and did as much harm as they could to their one-time masters. They knew all the secret routes and lurking-places of the country and were therefore difficult to find. Also, the maroons were so brazen that they had extended their inroads up to the doors of Nombre, so that it had to be specially protected against them during the time of the transport.

The knowledge that the town was being daily reinforced gave Drake wings. He left his two ships behind at the Island of Pines, and went on alone with the two pinnaces. He took only seventy-three men with him.

After five days they reached the Gulf of St. Blas, where they were still five nautical miles away from Nombre. They landed on an island here and distributed among themselves the weapons which they had brought with them in barrels : six good shields and swords, six firing-pikes, twelve pikes, twenty-four muskets and blunderbusses, sixteen bows, six partisans, two drums and two trumpets. Thus in all they were forty marksmen and thirty hand-to-hand fighters. The double number of signalling weapons shows that Drake intended making an attack in two divisions. After the distribution he drilled his men for a few hours, then collected them round him, explained to them his plan and the position of the town, which should be easy to capture as there were no walls, and thoroughly inflamed them by reminding them of the knavish trickery at San Juan de Ulua. Then he ordered them to enter the boats.

Before sunset they were well up the river Francis. They now needed to be careful so as not to be seen by the harbour look-out. They sailed close along the coast, and when they were about two nautical miles away from the town they lowered the sails, cast anchor and waited until it grew dark.

Then they rowed quietly forward. As they came in sight of the harbour, they anchored again, this time to wait for dawn. Drake detailed some of the men to watch and let the others sleep.

But he soon noticed that the men were not sleeping. They whispered incessantly, and he guessed at their anxiety. They were nearly all of them quite young men, who would be facing death for the first time. The distant town where so many lights were shining seemed to them to be far too big for their little troop. ‘It's as big as Plymouth,’ said one. The negroes' warning led them to imagine there was an enormous number of troops there, and Drake and one or two stout-hearted fellows had repeatedly to reassure them.

Meanwhile, it had grown dark. The lights across the water went out one by one.

Then the whispering began again.

Drake realized that he must act at once. Just then a light shone on the water and made a curious pathway over to the town. It could only be the moon.

Drake lied to them. ‘It is dawn. Let us set out!’ he cried.

They pushed the boats off without a sound. As they approached, the moon came out of the clouds and transformed the dark waters into liquid silver. The outlines of a carvel stood out against the light. There was life on deck. They saw a boat push off from the ship and try to reach the shore before them. A rowing match began and they forced their competitors out to sea. When they saw the number of men in Drake's boats they gave up the race.

The boats grated on the sand. Twelve men remained in them, the others under Drake's leadership ran on to the platform where the harbour guns stood, threw them off their gun-carriages and rendered them useless. An artilleryman who was guarding them took to his heels and fled into the town.

Isolated shouts and cries were heard. Doors banged. Men fled into the streets. Lights.

In a trice the alarm was given, all too readily because of the anticipated danger from the maroons.

Drums rolled. Trumpets were sounded. Bells rang.

The town was in an absolute turmoil.

Drake quietly drew up his men on the shore and led them through the noise to a hillock at the eastern end of the place. Here, according to information given to him, there was to be a new artillery base set up. If it had been completed he would have to take it, as it dominated the town and harbour. They found new earthworks and loop-holes, but no guns.

They returned to fight in the town. Drake divided his men into two divisions. One, under his brother and John Oxenham, was to attack the market-place from the east by a circuitous route, while he would lead the larger force down a wide road straight from the hillock to the market.

The march began, and to draw attention to his troops Drake ordered the drums to be beaten and the trumpets sounded. The pikemen stuck torches on their pikes to light the way, for it was still dark.

In the meantime, the Spanish soldiers and townsfolk had collected in the market-place near to the Governor's house, which was not far from the town gate that led to Panama. This was their natural fortification against the maroons, who, they thought, were now attacking them. They had drawn a rope across the market-place to which at intervals they had fastened burning torches so as to give the appearance of a line of sharpshooters. When Drake advanced with his men and saw the lights dancing in front of him, he stood surprised for a moment, but soon realized the trick as he saw two dark figures, who had been moving the line, run away from the ends of the rope. He ordered his men to storm the place. Then a volley was fired at them so low that the mud splashed into their faces. The trumpeter rolled on the ground. They attacked with rifles and muskets and let fly with their arrows. But only for a minute; then they went forward with swords, pikes, partisans and clubs and were supported at the right moment by the troops under John Drake and Oxenham, who rushed into the market-place from one side.

The Spaniards threw their weapons away and ran through the gate into the open: the English followed them and fell in the dark against the points and blades of the swords and spikes, which covered the dams, so that some of them were wounded and limped away groaning.

Drake did not continue in pursuit, but thought of the booty. He collected his troops in the market-place by the cross under a big tree which was in front of the church. The alarm bell was still ringing out from the church tower. He deputed a few men to silence it. But the church was locked and was strongly built. They wanted to set fire to the doors. Drake forbade this. He ordered some of the prisoners to lead him to the Governor's house, where they were endeavouring to unload the mules of the treasure from Panama. They found the door wide open and in front of it a saddled horse as though somebody was about to flee. A large room was faintly lit up by a candle. They found in it an enormous store of bars of silver lying by the wall. Drake, however, gave orders that nothing was to be touched; for he wanted gold, which was not here but in the Treasurer's house.

Just as they were hurrying there, a messenger came from the pinnaces. The twelve men who had been left with them were greatly alarmed. They had seen and heard the tumult and could not imagine what was happening. They had waited in vain for some news. Instead, some Spaniards fired on them, and they no longer felt safe. Drake sent his brother and Oxenham to help them, while he led his men to the Treasury.

In the heat of the struggle they had not realized that the weather was helping the Spaniards. A steady downpour had set in and then thunder and lightning began as violently as only a tropical storm can rage. It was soon raining in torrents, hail beat down on to the roofs, and the market-place was turned into a dirty foaming sea. There was an open shelter close to the Treasury and they took refuge under it. But their powder and slow matches were already wet and the strings of their bows were slack. They dried themselves as well as they could and bound up their wounds.

They waited for half an hour until dawn. The rain stopped, but there was an uncanny silence. There was not a Spaniard to be seen. No doubt they were gathering somewhere. What had happened to the boats? Again anxiety came over the young crew. Drake shouted at them roughly:

'Now I have brought you to the gate of the world's treasure-house. You have only yourselves to blame if you don't take anything home with you!'

John Drake and Oxenham came back and reported that the pinnaces were still in the same place. Drake at once put himself at the head of their division so as to force an entry into the treasure-house, and left his own men behind to cover the rear.

But he scarcely advanced a few steps when they saw that his footsteps were red and that blood was flowing in a thick stream from out of his boot. Nobody had known anything about it, but he had been wounded in the leg during the first attack. The next moment they saw him stagger and were just able to support him as he fainted. They gave him some water. He revived, bound his scarf round the wound and wanted to go on. They implored him to give up the idea. They wanted to take him back to the ship where he could have his wound examined and bound, after which they could come back again. Drake would not hear of it. He cursed and swore that they should not forsake such booty on his account, that there was no question of returning, and that they would never have such an opportunity again. They then seized him by force, carried him to the pinnaces, and rowed off.

Drenched through and exhausted as they were, they were, however, glad to take up their oars again.

But they did not want to leave the harbour entirely without booty. They rowed up to the ship which had sent a boat ashore on their arrival, and they captured her without much difficulty. Then they hoisted the sails and steered slowly out of the harbour. It was an acceptable prize after so much strenuous work, for it held a full cargo of wine.

A cannon-shot fell short of them, but let them know that their enemies were active again.

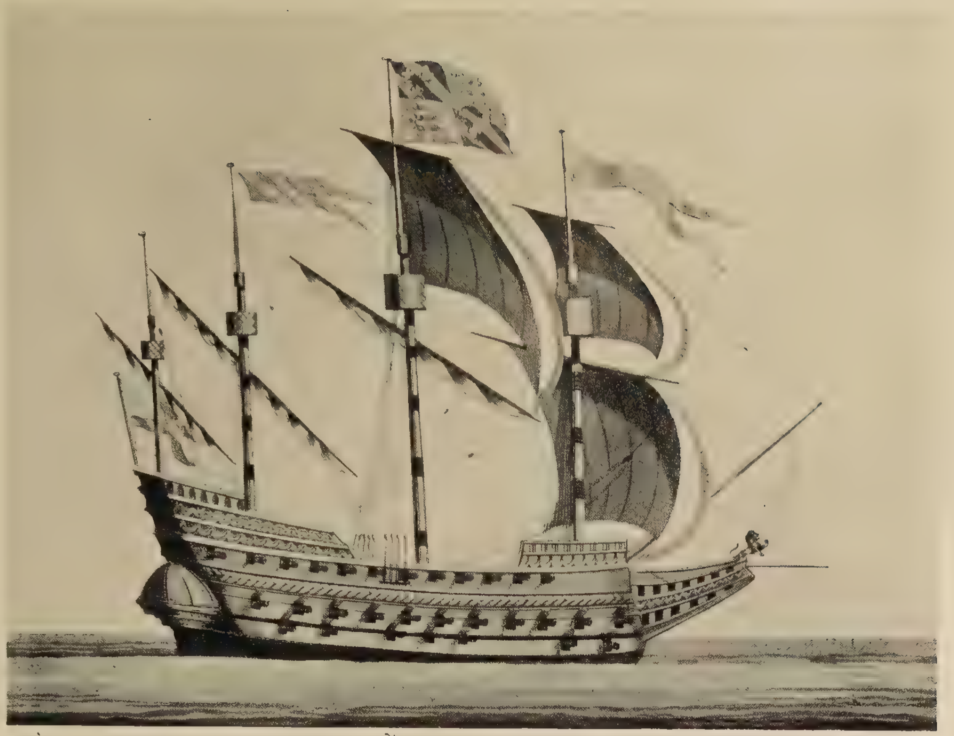
The coast behind them was soon lit up by the morning sun and the white houses of Nombre de Dios shone brightly.

The uproar of the night had died down.

There was only a dirty wet bundle lying in the market-place. It was the dead trumpeter and his played-out instrument. . . .

There was no doubt about it, the attack had failed. A second attack would have been useless, for the Spaniards had been warned. Troops in full force would now come from Panama to guard the sacks of gold. Drake was inconsolable. He blamed that cursed rain and his absurd wound! He steered back to the Island of Pines to his ships, and wondered what they should do next. The news of his arrival at Nombre must have spread rapidly along the whole coast. He could not therefore attempt anything more by surprise and the object of his voyage seemed to have failed. The only hope was to arrive somewhere before they had been forewarned. He would need to be as quick as lightning. He rapidly decided on Cartagena, the most important harbour after Nombre de Dios. He directed the attack in the same way and succeeded in reaching the harbour with the pinnaces unmolested, but only to learn that he was too late. There were troops everywhere. This time he managed to tow a prize away from the middle of the roadstead, but there was no question of a larger booty.

Then he realized that he would have to alter his whole plan if he did not want to return home with empty hands. But what was he to do? Quite by chance he hit upon an idea. While he was in Nombre de Dios a negro slave, called Diego, who was on good terms with the maroons, joined up with him. This negro advised Drake to throw in his lot



AN ENGLISH MAN-OF-WAR OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

From an Engraving by Tomkins

with these friends of his, who were not far away from the mouth of the river Chagres. As an enemy of the Spaniards they would welcome him with open arms and stand by him through thick and thin. Drake considered the proposal. It would mean giving up the whole of his customary practice, for it could only be a question of taking action on land. He would have to try to intercept the treasure on the Street of Gold instead of seeking it in Nombre. But would his men follow him? He had been doubtful about them in Nombre de Dios. It would be months before everything would be ready for the enterprise and by that time the treasure would be in Nombre, perhaps even on the galleons, but in any case it would be well guarded. How was he to kill time for a year until the flota returned? Still, he saw that the proposal was possible and indeed the only way in which anything could be accomplished. He finally seized the opportunity with both hands.

First of all, he scuttled his brother's ship, the *Swan*, and gave him his own, the *Pasha*, while he moved over with his men to the pinnaces. He was well aware that for a long time they had not felt at their ease in these uncomfortable vessels. If he kept them there any length of time he would soon have them on land. Then he disappeared for a time in a concealed bay so as to make the Spaniards feel safe again. During this time he allowed his men complete freedom that they might forget the failure. After this, he separated from his brother. John was to go to the north to the maroons and make an agreement with them, but at the same time to refrain from attacking the Spaniards, so that they should not be discovered. He, however, went south and roved about for months with no other object in view than to keep his men in action and to obtain victuals. When the journey in the pinnaces became too uncomfortable he sailed to the Chagres to join up with his brother again, who had meanwhile made friends with the negroes. The latter were ready to help. They wanted to provide guides and to take part themselves, for they were always glad to attack the Spaniards. John had anchored the *Pasha* by an island which was difficult of access on account of numerous shallows, and had built a fortification on the island itself, which he had called Fort Diego in honour of the resourceful negro. But when Drake arrived there in November 1572 he had a terrible shock. His brother had died a few days previously.

And this is how it happened :

One day as he and some of the men were taking wood in a boat to the fort they suddenly sighted a Spanish vessel. They wanted to chase and capture her. John thought of his brother's instructions and resisted.

' Listen,' he cried, ' these are our only weapons ! '

And he showed them a broken rapier, an old musket and a rusty blunderbuss. Indeed, they had nothing else with them.

In spite of this somebody muttered something about cowardice.

' All right ! ' cried Drake's brother. ' If you want to, go on ! I am the last one to stay behind. You shall not tell my brother you were kept back from your gains by my cowardice ! '

He seized the rapier and protected his hand with a rowing cushion. Another man, Richard Allen, took the musket and a third the blunderbuss. These three placed themselves in the front of the boat and the chase began. But they had come to the wrong place. When they drew close enough they saw that the ship was bristling with pikes and arquebuses. A salvo greeted them. John was shot in the stomach and Allen in the head. It was only with difficulty that they broke away from their opponent, who was in good fighting trim. An hour later both the wounded men died.

We do not know how Drake reproached his disobedient men, but he was not a man whose head was ruled by his heart. The attack had been foolhardy. He was in need of such men as those that had been killed.

A few weeks later, worse things were to follow. The maroons had sent out spies who were to bring news when the transport began. For months on end nothing was heard of them. The days slipped by without anything happening. Bad weather set in, alternate heat and unceasing rain. Their stores ran out. Then, at the beginning of the year, they had a terrible visitation. Ten men suddenly fell ill and died within three days. Immediately after this thirty more were struck down, among them another of Drake's brothers, Joseph, who was little more than a child. He died in his brother's arms. Nobody knew what the disease was. The doctor pleaded ignorance. If the disease spread any further, there would not be sufficient men to take the ship back to England. Drake decided to get to the bottom of the matter and had his brother's body dissected. They found that his liver was swollen and his heart looked as if it had been 'cooked'. It must have been the yellow fever, but the doctor was no wiser, for four days after the dissection he also died, not from the fever but from an antidote which he had concocted and had tested on himself.

Twenty-eight men died. . . .

At last the spies appeared. The transport had started.

Drake fitted out the expedition with special care, for the scheme was very risky. He wanted to advance as far as Panama, gain reliable information there about the country and the people, and then attack the transport in a suitable place and destroy it. This would mean further marches through an untrodden region. At the outset he separated all the weak and ailing men, so that there were only eighteen left who would be capable of marching. He gave the best weapons to these men, plenty of food and a good supply of shoes. Thirty maroons joined the English. The others remained under the command of Ellis Hixom on the Island of Death, which was what they had christened the fatal island.

On Shrove Tuesday, the 3rd February 1573, the journey began, which we will now follow from the report of one of the men who took part in it.

'Captain Drake and Lieutenant Oxenham led us, and the chieftain Pedro led the maroons.

'Our march first took us inland to a river. The track was scarcely visible. We went by secret paths known to the maroons and very often through the thickest bush. As the river was very winding, we had to cross it several times and came across a number of small streams, so that without our negroes we should never have been able to find our way.

'On the shore we had all been very enthusiastic, but the farther the sea was left behind us the more difficult it was for us to march. A scorching sun burnt down on us, we could not rid ourselves of the thick clouds of mosquitoes, which swarmed round us, and the smell of the marshes and forest was so suffocating that the sweat rolled in streams down our faces.

'We came to admire the maroons. They did not seem to get at all exhausted. They carried all our loads and weapons as well as their own; they cleared the way for us, built our shelters and foraged for fire and water.

'Each day we began our march at sunrise and proceeded in single file until ten o'clock in the morning, then we would rest until twelve and march on again until four o'clock. Very often we slept in huts, which the maroons had put up for their traffic on the river. For the most part, however, they built us our own shelters. They threw their loads down on to the ground where we were to camp, and cut down from the surrounding bush logs, staves and forked branches. Three such branches they stuck in the ground neatly arranged one behind the other and put a cross beam of some twenty feet over the fork. On either side of this they then placed branches slanting towards the ground, and covered these with palm and banana leaves, so that the whole thing looked like the roof of a cottage. They took care not to cover the roof right down to the ground, but left a large space near to the earth so that fresh air could enter. But when we camped on hills, where it was cold and windy in the night, they made the roof lower and covered it right to the ground, making the sides thicker and only leaving a door open in front. They usually built six huts like this, each of them divided into four parts. When it was cold they used to have three fires burning inside so that it was cosy and warm. The smoke used to find an outlet through a hole in the roof.

'They also procured plenty of good food every day, collecting on the way oranges, bananas, citrons, pineapples and potatoes, but they advised us not to eat too many potatoes and only when they had been roasted. They shot game and hunted wild boar, so that we had roast meat every evening. But one day when they put an otter in front of our captain he did not like to bite into it at once.

'"What," cried Pedro surprised, "you are a soldier and in time of need you don't eat everything which has blood in its body?"

'At which our captain promised to improve.

'On the third day of the march we came to a maroon village. It lay on a beautiful river, and, like a fortress, it was surrounded with walls and moats as a protection against the Spaniards, who had attacked it some time ago and had murdered women and children. At the first sign of a surprise attack the men had run away, but they gathered again and had succeeded in killing the Spaniards' guide, a maroon who had been won over by bribery and had shown them the way. The Spaniards did not know how to escape and were nearly all killed by the negroes in the forest. Since then the inhabitants had been left unmolested.

'They begged our captain to stay here for a few days, and promised him reinforcements, but he refused, for time was pressing.

'So the next day we marched on, and as we gradually came out from this impassable and swampy ground we became more careful and kept to marching order. Four maroons who knew the way best kept a mile ahead and broke twigs to show us the right direction. Twelve maroons marched behind them as an advance guard. We followed with the chieftains, and behind us came twelve negroes as rearguard. But we all had to keep as quiet as mice for the country was becoming more open. It was quite cool under the big trees on the hills and we were in the best of spirits.

'On the fourth day we reached a very high mountain. Then Pedro took our captain by the hand and asked him to follow him if he wanted to see something out of the ordinary. He led him to an enormous tree in whose trunk steps had been hewn, leading to a pulpit at the top where some ten or twelve men could sit quite comfortably. They climbed up to this.

'Our captain was deeply moved and we saw him kneel down and heard him pray aloud that God might grant him to sail on this sea one day in an English ship.

'Then he called us all up.

'And from there we had a wonderful view. We stood at the highest point above a sea of waving virgin forest, and all round us like a silver band the ocean stretched out into the distance. The Atlantic from where we had come was behind, and in front of us in the haze of the sun lay the South Sea, which no Englishman had ever seen before.

'Our captain pointed with his hand towards the horizon.

'"There, look at the golden sea, where the Spaniards fill their galleons! Do you want to be with me when I sail across there?"

'Before anyone else could speak Lieutenant Oxenham called out:

'"Captain Drake! Even if you were to drive me away, by God, I would follow you!"

'We then climbed down and rejoiced that we should soon reach our goal. For another two days we marched through the forest in the same way as before until we came to a wide stretch of pampas where the grass stood higher than a man. The Spaniards used very often to set this grass alight as the cattle could not graze on it. The ground, however, is so fertile here that despite the burning the grass shoots up again after three days, and the cattle can then eat it.

'We marched across the grass for three days. Suddenly from the top of a hill we saw the lights of a town in the distance.

'"That is Panama!" Pedro cried.

'We all stood still and looked for a long time at the place from where the gold flows all over the world. And our hearts throbbed; for it was a mighty town with churches and palaces, and we were only eighteen poor sailors and a crowd of half-savage negroes. We tried to catch glimpses of it as we continued our march, until on the third day we came so close to it that we saw the ships lying in the harbour. This was the flota of the South Sea with the gold-ship of Peru.

'Then the captain called us to him and made us lie down while he pointed out to us that we were in the greatest danger of being discovered here because, as the chief of the maroons had said, the ladies of Panama sent hunters up here every day to shoot birds. We were, therefore, to follow him quietly, well under cover, and to imitate his movements. He then went ahead with Pedro and some maroons and we followed at a distance in single file. Soon we all had to throw ourselves on the ground and creep forward for a long stretch through the tall grass until we came to the bed of a dried-up stream. We silently marched on, and at length reached a small wood, which was situated on the way from Panama to Nombre de Dios and at a distance of about a mile afforded a good view of the town.

'Here we had to hide ourselves and scarcely dared to move. Captain Drake, however, went to the edge of the wood from where he could observe the town. He studied its position and noted everything down.

'Now, we knew from the maroons that the transport usually started out from Panama in the evening so as to cross the grassland in the cool of the night because it was very hot during the day. The goods were carried by a caravan of mules, which the Spaniards called "*recuas*". In all, there were some twenty-eight of these *recuas* of different sizes. The larger teams, consisting of fifty to seventy mules, carried goods belonging to the Government, including King Philip's treasure, while the smaller teams of twenty to thirty mules were hired privately. All the caravans were escorted by soldiers to protect them against attacks from maroons.

'The next thing to do was to learn when to expect the next transport and what size it would be. A maroon who had formerly lived in Panama as a slave was therefore dressed up as a slave again and sent into the town as a spy. It was not long before he returned and brought us the best of news. Two *recuas*, each of fifty mules, laden with provisions and some silver, were ready to set off that evening. The Treasurer of Lima and his daughter were to ride at the head of the *recua* with his own private caravan of forty mules, of which eight were loaded with gold and one with precious stones.

'We could not have hoped for a better opportunity. The captain at once gave the order to march, for we dared not make any attack so close to the town. We marched inland to the road, which leads from Panama to Venta de Cruces and from there to Nombre de Dios. On the way two of the maroons brought in the advance guard of a Spanish post, whom they had found fast asleep. They had trussed him so tightly that he could hardly breathe. When he had recovered, our captain cross-examined him and found that all the spy's statements were confirmed. As soon as the Spaniard discovered who our captain was, he was very glad and promised to provide him with as much gold and silver as he would be able to carry away with him. Only he was to be given some of it so that he might live in comfort with his wife, and be protected from the maroons, who would certainly kill him if he entrusted himself to them. Then he praised aloud the generosity of our captain, which was well known to all.

'We halted some six miles from Venta de Cruces. It was quite dark and there was no moon, so that we could hardly see each other. Then we all had to put our shirts over our coats, so that we might see one another in the darkness. Captain Drake divided us into two groups. The one under his leadership was to lie down in a row next to each other in the high grass and fifty paces from the road. The other under John Oxenham and the chieftain Pedro was to do the same on the other side of the road, not opposite but rather to one side so that the whole *recua* might be simultaneously attacked.

'So we lay in complete silence and waited. Soon it became lighter and the moon shone on to the straight road. The grass seemed to be alive with many creatures that hummed and chirped round us. We heard muffled noises in the distance and saw the fading lights of Panama. . . .

'An hour later we suddenly heard a soft ringing. It was the ringing of the bells, which the mules wore round their necks. They were on their way. But the ringing came from both sides; from Venta Cruz and from Panama. Our captain, however, had given orders that if any *recuas* came from Venta Cruz we were to let them pass as they could not be carrying anything of value.

'Suddenly there was a sharp sound of hoofs coming from Venta and we saw in the feeble light a rider approaching at a trot.

'There was a certain Robert Pike in Oxenham's party. He had had too much to drink the night before and had taken it neat. When he saw the rider approaching he jumped up and wanted to dance in the road. A maroon, who was lying next to him, managed to seize him and fell on top of him so that he could not move. But the rider had already seen the white figure and realized that there were several in the grass. He set off at once at a gallop and dashed past Captain Drake's party, who could not understand why he did this, as at first he had heard him trotting quietly along. He thought it had just happened by chance or because of the danger of the place, which was well known to every Spaniard. So he simply remained lying on the ground and waited.

'For some time there was no ringing to be heard and then suddenly it came very close to us and we recognized by the foremost mules that it was a *recua* from Panama. We let them go past and as the end of the train came in sight Master Drake's whistle rang out shrilly through the silence.

'Then the grass rustled and we fell upon them from all sides.

'They dared not offer any resistance and surrendered without further ado. We unloaded the boxes and sacks from the mules, opened them and thought we should rummage with both hands in gold and emeralds. But, alas! we grasped flour, potatoes and fruit. We found only two loads of silver.

'We were very disappointed, and Drake questioned the driver about the treasurer and his *recua*. And then we heard that the rider had met the Treasurer, who was riding at the head of the *recua*, and had told him what he had seen. The worthy gentleman had immediately halted with his team of mules and had let the two less valuable caravans pass by him while he returned to Panama.

'Then Master Drake was seized with rage and so were we all. We should all have been glad if he had had the tipsy fellow hanged. He did not do that, however, but turned away for a minute and then said dryly that the Treasurer had probably not gained his riches unjustly as God had protected him so well from us. And he gazed straight in front of him again. Our position now was dangerous. In a short time the garrison of Panama would be after us. But we were too few and too tired and dispirited to be able to fight them. Where were we to go in the dark and in this unknown country?

'Pedro declared that there were two possibilities. We could either go back the long way over which we had marched, or take the road through Venta Cruz to the coast, which was nearer, but led through the enemy. Captain Drake quickly made up his mind. He asked Pedro:

'"Will you give me your hand on it that you and your people will not desert us?"

'The chieftain shook him firmly by the hand.

'"Rest assured! I will stand by you even if it means death to us all."

'And so we decided to make our way by Venta Cruz. First we rested, satiated ourselves with the food of which we now had a surplus and packed our pockets and sacks full so that we should not suffer want later on. Then we mounted the mules and went to Venta Cruz with the *recua*.

'After a while the road plunged before us into a thick forest, where according to the maroons the Spaniards had a strong outpost. We therefore left the *recuas* behind before we entered the thicket, and forbade the drivers to follow us under pain of death.

'We marched carefully through the darkness, two maroons leading an arrow-shot's length ahead of us so that we could see if they were suddenly fired upon. The path was so narrow that two *recuas* could only just pass each other, and the forest stood on either side like a thick wall. We could only use the open path.

'Suddenly the two maroons stopped and we smelt the burning of torches and heard noises.

'"*Heda!*" called a voice.

'"*Heda!*" answered Captain Drake.

'"Who are you?"

'"English!"

'"In the name of the King of Spain, surrender!"

'"In the name of the Queen of England, allow us free passage!" called Drake and fired his pistol into the thicket.

'Then a volley of shot was discharged in our faces, wounded our captain and several others and hurled John Harris to the ground. We all threw ourselves down and allowed them to shoot. The shots flew over our heads.

'As the firing died down somewhat Drake blew his whistle.

'And now we greeted them with muskets and arrows and began to advance in order.

'At the first moment the maroons were so terrified by the Spanish firing that they had fled to one side, but when they saw us push forward they jumped out on to the path in front of us, shooting their arrows, dancing a wild war dance and howling:

'"*Yo peho! Yo peho! Yo peho!*"

'Then the Spanish retreated back across the bush. We followed them and soon came to close quarters. They defended themselves bravely. A maroon was thrust through with a pike and some of our men were wounded. Among the enemy there were not only soldiers but some monks. We handled them roughly.

'We soon stood unmolested in the streets of Venta Cruz, a town of some forty or fifty houses and a number of warehouses in which the goods coming to and from Panama were stored. The captain halted us and gathered us round. We examined our wounds which were not serious. John Harris was the only one who was bleeding profusely: he died the next day. Then we placed guards at the exits to the town and searched the houses and warehouses, but found nothing of any value. We refreshed ourselves with food and drink. We also ransacked a monastery and came across a whole stock of letters of indulgence which had only lately been imported from Rome. Our captain, however, left the town for the maroons to plunder after ordering them to spare all unarmed inhabitants.

'We had been in the town for about two hours when morning began to dawn. Our captain gave orders for departure. We assembled before a bridge which led over the river Chagres and were placed in the old marching order. As we halted there we suddenly saw a Spanish patrol trot into the town. But they went out again quicker than they had come in, for they pulled their horses round as soon as they saw us and galloped away.

'We marched over the bridge, for our road led from the other bank to the coast. And now we felt as safe as in a fortress with walls and moats. We knew that no Spaniard would dare to follow us and the maroons into the wilderness.

'The march back was much worse than the advance, for we were now suffering severely from lack of provisions. Indeed, our black friends invited us to make a detour to their villages. But Captain Drake would not hear of it. He pressed on towards the coast, not because he was afraid of the Spaniards but because he was anxious about the ships and our sick comrades. He was always lively and of good cheer and promised to compensate us doubly and threefold for all our trouble. Whatever happened he would not return to England without gold. Apart from hunger, our feet hurt us, for they were very sore and swollen. The roughness of the path and the length of the march had so torn our boots that they flapped round our legs in tatters. The captain was also limping and he soon joined in our complaints and curses, which cheered us up wonderfully. And again how we appreciated the maroons! When one of us could not go a step further, two of them lifted him up between them and carried him for miles until he felt rested.

'At last we reached a place not far from the beach where the negroes who had remained behind had built a number of huts in our absence. The captain called a halt and sent a messenger to our ships.

'And on the next day, at three o'clock in the afternoon, as we went down the river we saw our pinnaces rowing up it.

'Then there was great rejoicing and greetings and we thanked God heartily that we had been vouchsafed to see our ships and comrades again.'

Drake had no difficulty in getting his crew into a good mood again. They forgot their misfortunes as soon as they once more saw the waves rolling towards them and the sails swelling above them, and nobody wanted to return with empty pockets. They now threw themselves into piracy, and were fortunate in capturing a large frigate with an enormous cargo of maize, twenty-eight pigs and two hundred chickens, so that they were able to celebrate a festive Easter. They were only hindered from larger enterprises because of their small number, for they were only thirty-one men in all and could not even man all their ships. They therefore set fire to one of the pinnaces. Then they had luck. One day they sighted a sail which they chased. As they approached, it turned out to be a Frenchman under Captain Tetu, a well-known Huguenot, who had left his country after the horror of St. Bartholomew's Eve, and, like Drake, was waging his private war here against the Pope and his Most Christian Majesty. He had been searching for Drake for weeks and now proposed to join in with his enterprise. Drake agreed on condition that the spoil should be divided in half although the French had at their disposal thirty-nine more men.

Drake at once made a fresh agreement with the maroons, and when he learnt that the transport of goods between Panama and Nombre de Dios was proceeding he decided to try his luck again, this time not at Panama but at the last station on the road immediately behind Nombre de Dios.

Fifteen Englishmen and twenty Frenchmen were chosen and were joined by the maroons who had accompanied Drake on his first journey.

Our eyewitness continues his story:

'Captain Drake left the *Pasha* and the French ship behind at Fort Diego and set off in our new frigate and the two pinnaces across to the mainland to the mouth of the Rio Francisco, four miles to the west of Nombre de Dios. The troops disembarked here and the pinnaces received orders to remain hidden by the coast and to reappear three days later at the landing-place.

'We then marched in the same manner as on the way to Panama, in such good order and so quietly that the Frenchmen were very amazed. They distrusted the maroons, but our captain reassured them that they were not at all treacherous.

'Towards evening we came near to Nombre de Dios and we hid ourselves in the bush about a mile away from the road. We spent the night there and could hear the carpenters hammering and sawing on the galleons in the harbour. They had to work by night as it was too hot in the daytime.

'When the morning mist lifted slowly from the road we did not need to wait any longer. The bells of some mules rang out clearly in the distance and somebody called out:

'"You wait, we'll soon see what metal you are made of!"

'Then the joy of the maroons knew no bounds, and they danced about like madmen and grinningly assured us that we should soon have so much gold that we would not be able to take it away with us.

'We could overlook the whole route from the edge of the forest. There were three *recuas* on the march, one of fifty and the other of seventy mules, and all of them were laden with heavy sacks and chests.

'Our captain had given orders to attack from the front and the rear, so we divided up and swooped down on to the caravan and held them fast, whereupon the mules in the middle stood still at once and then, as was their custom, lay down on the ground. The military escort, consisting of about forty-five horsemen, tried a short rifle attack in which Monsieur Tetu received a load of shot in his body and one of the maroons was killed, but after that they galloped off for help to Nombre de Dios. In the meantime, we threw ourselves on to the load, first on to the largest bales, ripped the sacks open and forced the chests out of which poured gold, silver and precious stones. We stuffed our pockets full, tied up the bars in bundles and piled the most valuable things into the chests. Then we tried to see how much each of us could carry. It was very little in comparison with what we had to leave behind. We, therefore, buried most of the treasure under big trees and in crab-holes in the river sand. There were no less than fifteen tons of silver.

'We then set out on our homeward journey with our load.

'It was high time, for we could hear the sound of hoofs and voices in the distance. We disappeared quickly into the thicket where we knew the Spaniards would not follow us, especially as we had the maroons with us, who possess incredible skill and cunning in the forest. We had to drag Captain Tetu with us, who groaned loudly and could soon go no farther. He thought a rest would do him good, so we left him lying on the ground and one of his men stayed with him. Another Frenchman was also lost. He was drunk and had loaded himself so heavily with plunder that he was continually dropping everything, and by going back for his treasures he finally lost us.

'We marched the whole day and spent the night in the forest in a terrible rainstorm. The next day we came to the mouth of the Rio Francisco where we searched in vain for our pinnaces. Instead, we saw seven Spanish sloops sail by from the place where we were expecting to see our own ships. Then we all had gloomy forebodings. Probably the Frenchmen who had remained behind had been seized and tortured by the Spaniards and had betrayed everything, and the Spaniards had got on the track of the pinnaces and captured them. A bitter thought. Many of us lost heart. We were exhausted and drenched through and had imagined that we and our treasures would soon be in safety again.

And now this disappointment! The discontented men grumbled that they would be cut off from home, what was the good of all the treasure, the Spaniards would soon be upon us!

'But the captain was unafraid and said:

'"You are no worse off than I am. And if all your fears were justified, this is not the time to complain. We must act. I tell you it is quite impossible for the Spaniards to have captured the pinnaces. They need time to do that. Also they need time to discover the French and make them confess, time to fit out the ships to find the pinnaces and to capture them. Before that happens we can easily be with our ships. Let us build a raft and search for them! Who is willing?"

'John Smith and two Frenchmen raised their hands. The maroons also wanted to go with them, but Drake asked them to stay behind, for there were too many of them and they did not know how to sail or row.

'Several tree-trunks had been washed up and we bound these together, hoisted a biscuit bag as a sail and added a young tree as a rudder. Master Drake and his three companions jumped on to it and promised to bring us all on board again despite the Spaniards at sea or on land.

'So they set off before the wind. It was no pleasure trip. Each heavy sea soaked them to the skin. The brine and scorching sun cut their faces, and a dreadful thirst made them feel weak and wretched. Still, they did not give in, but hoped to be rescued. After they had gone some three miles, God rewarded them, for they saw two pinnaces, which Drake immediately recognized as ours.

'But, alas! the pinnaces did not see them. As it was evening and the wind was against them, they steered into a bay behind a peninsula and disappeared. Then the captain turned his raft towards the shore of the peninsula and landed on the weather-side, for he wanted to punish the men in the pinnaces for their inattention and negligence. Drake and his two companions rushed at them as they lay on the beach and pretended he was going to attack them. The fellows were so terrified that they ran off for their weapons.

Then they recognized the captain and besieged him with questions. How were we and how had the expedition fared ?

' Drake pretended to be very downcast.

' Then they made long faces. They believed he was the only one to return and that he had no booty.

' But he pulled a large bar of gold out of his coat and held it up against the evening sun.

' They cheered, danced round him and asked him to tell them what had happened, and reported that a contrary wind had delayed their sailing.

' That same evening they once more put out to sea together and had a hard task before they reached us in the morning. Our joy was great. We loaded our treasures and returned safely as rich men to our ships.'

Drake's main object was attained. The voyage had justified itself. His men could be more than satisfied. He therefore began to think of the return home. But he first had to fulfil a debt of honour. He sent a division under Oxenham to the place where Captain Tetu and the Frenchman had remained behind. On landing they met one of the missing men, who told them that Tetu and the other man had been taken prisoner by the Spaniards, whereas he had saved himself by fleeing. Oxenham then visited the place where they had buried the treasure on their return march and discovered that the ground had been dug up far and wide. The prisoners had no doubt been tortured to reveal the hiding-places and the Spaniards had dug everything up again. Nevertheless, Oxenham was able to recover thirteen bars of silver and a few bars of gold.

Drake now made all preparations for their departure. He made a fair division between themselves and the French, and discharged them. He did not want to take the *Pasha* and the pinnaces back to England with him, as they were hardly seaworthy. He gave the *Pasha* to some Spanish prisoners whom he had detained for months in Fort Diego so that they should not betray this hiding-place. He burnt the pinnaces and presented the iron parts to the maroons, so that now the only vessel he had left for the homeward voyage was the frigate which was the last prize he had made. This was not enough for him, and as he still had to collect victuals, he went on a short raid. He no longer kept his movements secret. With all flags flying he sailed down the coast, past mighty Cartagena, the flag of St. George at the stern and pennants at the masts. He soon had the prize he wanted. It was another frigate laden with beans, pigs, chickens and honey. That was sufficient.

There were still his black friends, the maroons, to be thought of.

Before taking leave of them, he took their chieftain, Pedro, over his ship and invited him to take whatever he liked. His eyes lighted on Drake's sabre. It was a wonderful piece of work with a golden hilt and ornamented with precious stones. Drake had received it as a present from Tetu ; it came from none other than King Henry III of France. The captain would have liked to keep it, but he gave it to the man to whom he was so deeply indebted. In return he received four large bars of gold, which he added to the rest for division amongst his men.

He took back to England with him the negro Diego, who had not stirred from his side since Nombre de Dios.

They sailed home with a good wind behind them, and in twenty-two days had crossed from Cape Florida to the Scilly Isles. They steered into Plymouth on the 9th of August 1573. Of the seventy-three men who had sailed away on that May morning in two wonderful new ships only thirty-one now returned, bringing with them an enormous booty of gold, silver and precious stones.

It was Sunday and the bells were ringing for church. 'But,' concludes our narrator, 'the people ran past the churches to see Captain Drake and his men, so that only a few heard the sermon. . . . And they perceived God's mercy and love for our Queen and country in the deeds and successes of our captain.'

CHAPTER IV

THE GOLD VOYAGE TO THE SOUTH SEA

ACCORDING to an old saying, a sailor should be a hearty fellow, whose every hair is a ropeyarn, each tooth a marline-spike, each finger a fish-hook, and the blood that flows through his veins good Stockholm tar. This was more necessary in olden times when ships were nut-shells as compared with those of to-day. They were tossed like cradles at stern and bow, and even a moderate sea would set them rocking enough to spoil the life of any sailor who had not yet found his sea-legs. Despite their size, they were heavy and solid and, according to our ideas, difficult to manage. Their masts and yards were rude, the sails and rigging coarse, and the quarters and cabins where hundreds of men were often penned together for months on end, were narrow and bare. They were always built of wood and rotted easily in tropical waters. After a few weeks the hull under water would be covered over with a thick crust of seaweed and shells which hindered sailing, the planks would rot, the ship's-borer riddle the walls, and the bilge-water often stood shoulder high. Frequent careening, caulking and tarring were therefore necessary, and to do this they had to put in to land, but every unexpected landing was fraught with danger. They could never be certain in a strange harbour that their ship and cargo would not be seized, and they might easily run aground in an unknown roadstead. Sea charts were imperfect ; it is easy enough for a modern steamer to move out of a storm in a danger zone, but the sailing-vessels of those days were often tossed about for months on end, and if they were not lucky enough to reach a sheltering creek then splintered masts, torn rigging, tattered sails and broken rudders were their usual fate. Winds and currents would drive the helpless, exhausted rider of the waves before them, only to find a lonely grave somewhere on sand or stone.

The question of victuals presented great difficulties. Everything was pickled: meat, fish, vegetables and even the cheese; salt water was used for cooking and washing. Flour and rusks became mouldy on account of the damp and teemed with worms. As drinking-water went stale and dirty, it was never taken on board in large quantities; they depended on intermediate landings and rain for refilling their barrels. Every sailor in the tropical zone would claim his daily ration of beer, but what sort of a drink can it have been after rolling about for weeks and lying under the broiling sun! Brandy, too, was in demand, but it always did them more harm than good. Much of the inspiration of youth to-day rests on these voyages of old, but the log-books of these ships speak prosaically of gastric complaints, bowel troubles and the loathsome symptoms of scurvy.

Small wonder, then, that men were none too eager in those days to go to sea. Those who had not inherited the seaman's calling from their fathers kept away. If love of adventure took a man to sea he was considered as good as lost. Many a man set out as a youth and returned as an old man; many were never heard of again. It was rare that a sailor returned as a Croesus. They were full of hope when they set out, but in their old age, poor, ill and crippled, they filled the streets and hospitals. Owners and captains, therefore, had difficulty in manning their ships. The Government used to get what they wanted through press-gangs. Armed troops would search the coast and harbour corners and take by force what suited them, parting men from their wives, and children from their parents. The private enterprisers could only beat up recruits by promising mountains of gold and offering them Bacchus and Venus as enticements. Successful captains like Drake had no difficulties; their call guaranteed good gain; volunteers flocked to them. But they could only make use of the smallest number of men. The professional seaman preferred more modest coasting, which assured him a humble but certain income and allowed him to marry and establish a family. Instead of men like these, the fellows who offered themselves for long voyages usually had much to win and nothing to lose. For the most part they were debtors, criminals and adventurers. Many who were hired never dreamt of going on board at the time the vessel was due to leave. When Richard Hawkins, John Hawkins' son, wanted to put out to sea from Plymouth in 1593 he waited in vain for the men he had mustered. He grumbled that 'Some were always saying good-bye and never came on board, others got so drunk that they had to be dragged on board, and others feigned illness. Many of them borrowed money in the taverns and left me to pay their debts. I had to redeem one man's sea-chest, another man's sword, the third his shirts and the fourth his charts and instruments. A large number disappeared altogether, and lived for many a day on the money which I had paid them in advance. Such goings-on had become scandalous.'

The greatest and most famous voyages were made with such a rabble. They were only possible because the sailor at sea is a very different man from what he is on land. As soon as he is afloat in the midst of an infinite desert of waves with only a few inches of wood between himself and the bottomless sea then he instinctively feels his responsibility towards the rest of the crew and they to him. So it is that strict discipline at sea has always been an acknowledged law to which the most rascally pirates have submitted. The captain and officers did not mix with the men. They had their cabins aft from where they could observe the crew and give orders. The captain in particular was a little king. He occupied the largest cabin, where a guard stood holding a drawn sword. The helmsman, gunner, purser, and lieutenant were quartered near to him and also any gentlemen Government commissioners, or some patron or other, who sometimes sailed with them as guests. The crew was in the charge of the bos'n and the mates were lodged 'before the mast' together with the workmen, gunners and other soldiers. Implicit obedience was demanded and the penalties for petty offences were, according to our ideas, little less than barbarous. One of the mildest punishments was to lash them with the whip, or the dreaded cat-o'-nine-tails, an unwound rope of nine strands, which for greater effect was covered with knots. The culprit would be dragged over a chest or the capstan and thoroughly flogged either by the bosn' or an ever-ready jury. Cabin-boys always had to undergo this treatment which was piously called 'the law of Moses' and was usually practised on Mondays to propitiate the weather god for the rest of the week. Thrashings were never thought of as being humiliating. On the other hand, there were other punishments which meant dishonour and were usually dangerous to life, such as 'dropping from the main-yard' and the notorious 'keel-hauling'. 'Dropping from the mainyard' or 'ducking from the yard-arm' meant that the culprit had a rope fastened round his body and then he was suspended from the main-yard, ducked several times into the sea and then pulled up again. Keel-hauling was where the culprit was dragged under the ship by a rope from larboard to starboard of the vessel. Wherever possible this was accompanied by the firing of a cannon, so that through the swell of the water and lurching keel the wretched fellow would lose his hearing and sight.

Despite this severe discipline scarcely one of the captains was spared a mutiny on board. The hardships were often too great and there were too many people in too small a space. Also, there was a dangerous contrast between the professional sailors and the greenhorns, who did not hold any special commission and only on the strength of connexions or their money were taking part in the voyage and liked to play the part of commanding officers. They were often an excellent match for the men, for many of them were tried soldiers, but the Jack Tars never welcomed them. They preferred their own class and would rather be flogged by a rough bos'n than be touched by a fine cavalier in kid gloves. Also, the captain and officers used to treat them with scorn. However, so long as the wind was favourable and the food was good and fresh everything went smoothly. But difficult days came as sure as death. If a voyage was delayed by a storm that raged for weeks on end and six men had to live on rations scarcely sufficient for four, then discontent and quarrels would begin. The men would long to be home again and would complain that they had been enticed away and deceived. Experienced captains used then to deal very promptly with the ringleaders. And woe betide them if their own shield of honour were smirched and self-interest, injustice or actual overstepping of the mark were proved against them ! The sailors would usually tolerate rough treatment, for it had been sanctioned by tradition, but in matters of wages, food or the division of booty they demanded fair play. There are numbers of cases where distinguished captains have been either displaced or killed or marooned on some lonely coast. On the other hand, there were others who knew how to act justly, and they could quell any revolt. Democracy does not exist at sea. The masses can forget themselves only for an instant, in reality they are looking for a leader and again and again like the phoenix they produce him from amongst themselves. Braggarts and idle boasters cannot hold their own for long at sea, where experience and character are so severely put to the test. Necessity will always choose the right man, who knows what he wants and at the same time does not offend others. If something distinguished an outstanding leader, then a judgement would be passed on him such as that which was pronounced upon Drake by one of his companions : that he readily listened to every one's opinion, but he always followed his own counsel.

Drake had never forgotten his experience on that tree in the Cordilleras. Ever since then he had been incessantly occupied with thoughts of a long voyage out to the Mare del Sur where the Spanish galleons were still carrying their cargoes of gold undisturbed.

His companion at that time, Oxenham, had, however, anticipated him. In the year 1575 he sailed with one ship and seventy men towards the isthmus, which with the help of the maroons he crossed for the second time. He built a small pinnace on the shores of the South Sea with which he actually succeeded in capturing two Spanish ships carrying silver, but when he was returning with the plunder he quarrelled with his men and the maroons. It ended in separation and all manner of imprudences which set the Spaniards on his track. He was caught and later executed in Lima. A brave man, he lacked the two necessary qualities of a leader: self-reliance and cool calculation. Charles Kingsley in *Westward Ho!* has combined his adventures with the romantic seduction of a beautiful Spanish girl, but this picture of sentimental love-affairs ill becomes the old sea-wolves. They were certainly not averse to the pleasures of love, but they never took long to choose between gold and love. He who possessed the first could have the second gratis.

Meanwhile, Drake was otherwise engaged. As on his return from the May voyage, he very soon vanished out of sight after his arrival. There is still a muddy little corner in Queenstown harbour from where, like other ' beggars of the sea ', he used to swoop down upon Spanish carvels. Then suddenly we find him as commanding officer of a ship in the services of the Earl of Essex, and going on an expedition to Ireland. There he appears for the first time among the greatest soldiers of his day, for which his success in the West Indies undoubtedly recommended him. From that time he was a changed man. He improved both in personality and bearing. The impetuous child of nature became a well-mannered courtier with a liking for refined society, and it was then that he made the only friendship about which we know anything, and which was to have such a tragic ending. There was a young courtier amongst the acquaintances of Essex, who because of his good breeding and culture was easily distinguished from the rest of his heartless and coarse companions. He shone in humanistic pursuits, studied Greek and Hebrew, valued Plato and the fine arts, had studied law and was an able speaker, a brave soldier and an astute diplomat; in short, he resembled in many ways the ideal of that period—the gentleman of the Renaissance. His name was Thomas Doughty, and it is not to be wondered at that Drake felt drawn to him, for this man possessed all that he himself lacked and which, on account of his rude calling, he could never have acquired. Drake confided to his friend the plans of his voyage to the

South Sea, which was no small trust, for he must have known from experience how carefully such matters had to be handled if they were not to reach the ears of the Spanish ambassador. Thomas Doughty took an active interest in the scheme and promised to give powerful assistance.

At that time there were considerable differences of opinion in English politics, which resulted in the formation of a war party and a peace party. The party of war, to which the Earl of Leicester, the Queen's favourite, belonged, together with Walsingham, the Secretary of State, Winter, the Lord of the Admiralty, and his assistant Hawkins, considered that war with Spain was inevitable and worked systematically to that end. The peace party, led by Lord Burghley, the influential Chancellor of the Exchequer, hoped for an understanding with Philip and avoided all enterprises which would damage this. Drake, therefore, could only carry through his plan with the war party. It was probably the Earl of Essex who commended him to Walsingham, who in turn informed the Queen of his intentions. Doughty was at that time private secretary to the Chamberlain, Christopher Hatton, and probably recommended Drake. There is, however, a veil over the part he played, which was only lifted by Drake very much later.

One day the Queen summoned Drake and announced to him :

' Drake, the King of Spain has offended me on a number of different occasions, for which I demand satisfaction. You are the only man I would wish to trust, so tell me what you propose to do.'

Hereupon, Drake developed his plan for a voyage to the South Sea, through the Straits of Magellan, and for an attack on Panama. Elizabeth was at once eager about this and promised to take a share of one thousand crowns in the enterprise, on condition that the object of the voyage should remain secret. Above all, Lord Burghley was not to hear anything of it. Drake promised this.

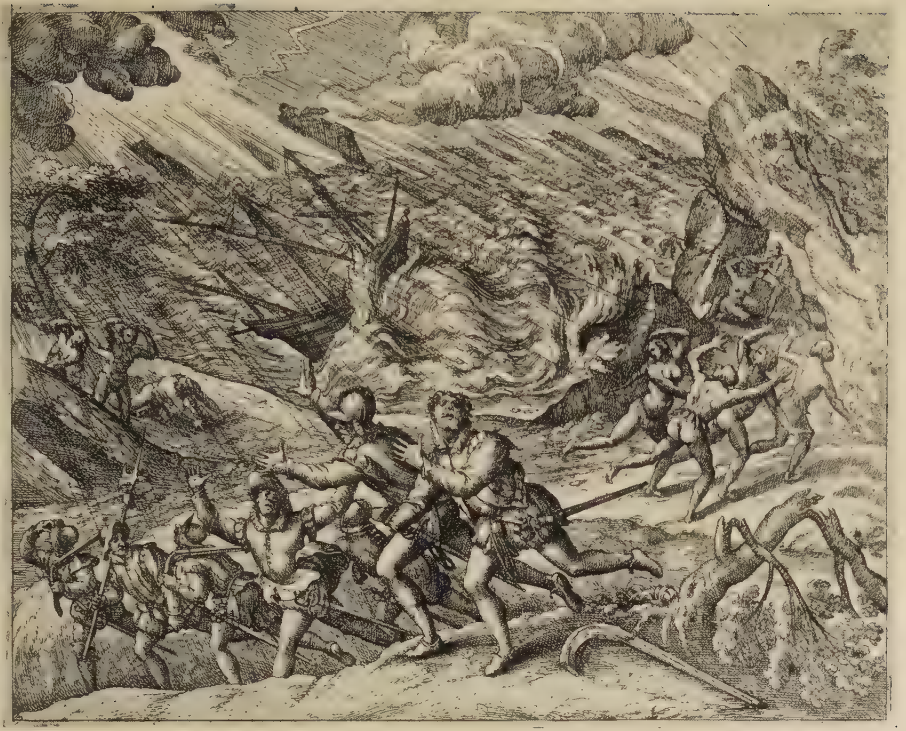
She then handed him a sword with these words :

' Drake, he who fights against you, fights against me.'

Preparations for the journey were immediately begun and conducted in all secrecy. As usual, a society of merchant adventurers was formed, who risked their money in the enterprise. Apart from Drake, the Queen, Leicester, Hatton and Walsingham all had large shares in it. When the matter became public the old game of pretending a false objective was begun. The crew were enrolled for a journey to Alexandria and in the end they were supposed to be going to Ireland. In 1577 there was a severe disagreement with Spain on account of Mary Stuart, and England was on the verge of war. Drake made use of this moment to put quietly out to sea from Plymouth.

This time five ships set out for the West. The *Pelican* was the flagship under Captain Drake's command. His youngest brother Thomas was also on board, as well as a nephew, John Drake, a fifteen-year-old boy, his page, Thomas Doughty, whose brother John also came, and a number of other gentlemen who went with them without any commission. Drake also took Diego, the negro from Nombre de Dios. The other men-of-war in the squadron were the *Elizabeth* and the *Marigold*, a fly-boat, the *Swan* intended to be used as a transport ship and a small pinnace under the command of Thomas Moon, a faithful ship's carpenter, who so far had accompanied Drake on all his voyages. All the vessels were small but swift sailers and excellently equipped with arms and munition. The comfort and pleasures on board had been especially provided for because of the length of the voyage. There was a band on board and the cabins were made more habitable than before, especially Drake's, which was beautifully furnished. His dishes were made of pure silver.

There was only one hitch about the victualling, which on Doughty's recommendation had been entrusted to James Syday, who had executed his task extremely badly. Drake found himself in a most embarrassing position, and on sailing out of the Channel near Lizard Head a stormy south-wester broke the masts of the *Pelican* and *Marigold* and swept them overboard. He rapidly made up his mind and ordered the ships to be put about and to return to



A STORM AT SEA

From an Engraving

Plymouth. This was not at all welcomed by the superstitious seamen.

After repairing the damage and completing the victualling they sailed in fair weather to the coast of Africa. Near to Cape Blanco they captured a Portuguese carvel, which they annexed to the squadron under the name of *Christopher* and left the *Benedict* behind instead of it. They next put in at the Cape Verde Isles. Here Drake wanted to take in water and supplement the provisions. He sent Doughty inland with a troop of men to go foraging. They returned, however, without having found anything. At this point, Doughty is supposed to have complained about his subordinate position: he had the same rights as Drake and the enterprise had only been able to take place because of his activities and intercessions. Also, he had invested certain sums of money in it. These complaints were all the more remarkable since Drake always treated his friend with definite consideration, so that the other men were almost jealous.

The failure of this expedition must have been very unpleasant for Drake, for he needed victuals for a long voyage. Luck then sent him a second Portuguese vessel. It was easily captured and turned out to be well stocked with food and wine. The officers and crew became good-tempered again and the voyage was assured. Drake also added this prize to the squadron and gave over the command of this ship to his friend Doughty whose complaints had come to his ears.

He could not have done anything worse. Was it Doughty who could not accustom himself to life at sea and laid exaggerated claims to authority, or was it the sailors who were displeased with this landlubber of a captain? Whatever it was, trouble began. Drake had given strict orders that no one was to touch the booty. Then one day he heard from Doughty that he had surprised Drake's own brother Thomas, who was on board the prize, in the very act of breaking open one of the chests. Doughty's behaviour must have already caused Drake some anxiety, but he refrained from interference as bad feeling between seamen and gentlemen was nothing new. This case, however, called for an inquiry. He was immediately rowed over to the prize and learnt at the examination that Thomas Drake on his side accused Doughty of having enriched himself with the booty. The question concerned a few pieces of jewellery, which had been found in his possession. Doughty, however, declared that he had received them as a present from one of the Portuguese prisoners, which was interpreted by Thomas Drake as bribery. Some of the men brought up other complaints against Doughty, which related to his attitude towards Drake and seemed to indicate that Doughty imagined that he, as well as Drake, possessed an absolutely independent command. Drake, who was particularly angry that his friend had not been able to clear himself of the accusation of having disregarded his orders, was very upset. He made it clear to Doughty that a man who wants to command should first learn to obey, and so as to avoid future disagreements he deprived him of his command and took him back to the *Pelican*.

Friends intervened and the matter seemed to be settled. Drake may have considered the crew on the prize, which had now been rechristened the *Mary*, to be unreliable, and as the cargo which they had on board was meant for the whole voyage, he decided to take over the command of the prize himself and silenced Doughty by giving him command of the *Pelican*.

They were now on their way to Brazil.

All went well for a time and then fresh complaints arose about Doughty. He was exceeding his authority and was disregarding Drake's orders. Drake could not listen to this any longer without regretting having taken his friend, and he began to fear for the success of the voyage. He was prepared for some opposition on such a long voyage, but Doughty might make use of this to pursue his own claims.

Drake had a very devoted man with him on the *Pelican*. This was John Brewer, the trumpeter. He now sent him back to the *Pelican*, possibly to be kept well informed about the conditions on board that ship.

Just at that time there was a calm which lasted for days on end, and the crew of the *Pelican* were longing for some distraction. Brewer came just at the right moment. He was received with general shouts of delight as he appeared on board. He was seized by the collar and dragged over the capstan to teach him by a sound thrashing that he had exceeded his leave on the *Mary*. Doughty also took part in the coarse fun and laid claim to the first stroke since he had the lightest hand.

Brewer, however, misunderstood the fun. It was nothing to feel a dozen Jack Tars' fists on his back, but now he saw in it an evil intention against Drake, whose faithful servant he was recognized to be. He yelled with all his might.

'Let me go, you rogues! I know very well that the captain has no friends among you. And as for you, Master Doughty, I particularly beg to decline any familiarity from you. You are not on the best of terms with our captain.'

'My dear John Brewer,' replied Doughty calmly, 'I am the captain's friend just like you and all the rest of us, and who maintains the contrary is a liar. But I very well know what secret design you are harbouring. All the same I think I shall return to England quite safely in spite of you.'

Immediately after this scene, Brewer rowed across to Drake to complain and shortly after a boat from the *Mary* brought an order for Doughty to appear at once before Drake.

Doughty went. As he came alongside the *Mary* a service was being held on board. Drake stood up as he saw Doughty coming aboard and called out to him:

'Stop, Thomas Doughty, you are to be berthed elsewhere.'

And he gave an order for him to be rowed over to the *Swan*.

So here was another breach, and Doughty's soldier pride must have been deeply wounded to be sent to the transport ship. The cause seemed to be a trifle, and it is hard to say what went on in Drake's mind at that time. Was he under the influence of a group who wanted to ruin the courtier? Did he feel he had to suppress the increasing trouble before it was too late and that he would sooner sacrifice his friend than anger the sailors of whom he stood in greater need?

Another more curious reason is possible. When Doughty went on board the *Swan* he told them that Drake had sent him there as a devil's magician and sorcerer. Actually, the younger Doughty had once boasted that he and his brother could raise the devil from hell and make him appear as a lion, a bear or a knight clad in armour. They also knew how to poison a man with a diamond so that he died at the end of a year. Was Drake superstitious? Most sailors are superstitious and the sixteenth century in particular was the heyday of satanists and black magicians. The voyage had begun with a storm, which had thrown them back into port. The choice of a victualling officer on Doughty's recommendation had been a failure. Doughty's foraging expedition on the Cape Verde Isles had been unsuccessful. Doughty did not know how to get on with his men and had undermined Drake's command. It was always Doughty and again Doughty. He seemed to be the evil genius of the whole expedition.

It also happened that the weather during the crossing had been far from favourable. It had been calm for weeks on end, alternated by sudden storms and tempests. The wind was usually against them and when, after two months' sailing, they reached the Brazilian coast and thought they were safe, the rain came down in a deluge. After much searching they had found a bay where they wanted to put in to rest for a few days and to clean the ships. Then suddenly a fog enveloped them so that they could not see anything at all. A terrible storm arose and scattered the ships in all directions. When it cleared again the *Christopher* had vanished. All manner of fears were voiced. Weird stories went about. The crew said they were on a bewitched coast, the *terra daemonum* of the Portuguese. Indians, who knew the magic arts, were supposed to live here and when they spied a strange vessel they threw sand over their heads. The sea would immediately be covered with an 'Egyptian darkness', reefs suddenly grew up out of the waves all round the ship, a raging storm chased the vessel before it, while rain would beat down, and thunder and lightning would shake the masts.

Had they fallen a prey to this magic? Drake cursed Doughty's black magic.

They found the long-sought respite in the mouth of the La Plata river. Here the *Christopher*, which they thought was lost, suddenly reappeared. Drake took over the command of his flagship again and gave the *Mary* over to his brother.

As they continued their voyage southward misfortune pursued them. The *Swan*, upon which Doughty was sailing, suddenly disappeared and despite zealous seeking could not be found again. The loss of the transport ship containing all the victuals might very well endanger the voyage, and Drake cursed from morning to night against black magic and sorcerers. A few days later he was convinced of having had fresh proof. He wanted to anchor under the promontory, Tres Puntas, and as usual was the first to go ashore to test the coast and anchorage. No sooner had he put his foot on the sand than a fog hid the whole squadron from view. A raging storm drove the ships away. It was with the utmost difficulty that he was able to save himself by getting back to the *Marigold*, where he was fished up out of a half-capsized boat. The next morning the *Mary* had vanished.

Two important vessels were now missing. And they searched this uncanny coast up and down. Finally they came up with the *Swan*. Doughty had not been having a very happy time of it. The captain of this ship, John Chester, was a puppet in the hands of John Sarocold, the helmsman, a regular sea-wolf, who was a bitter enemy of men of Doughty's type, who in his opinion only came on the voyage as superfluous eaters to reduce the rations of honest seamen. When Doughty came on board Sarocold immediately refused to eat at the officers' table as long as Doughty was there and went off to join the rest of the crew. But he saw to it that he missed nothing and even reduced the officers' rations.

Doughty's soldier heart was enraged at this lack of respect. He turned to Captain Chester:

'I am surprised, Captain, that you should allow this sort of thing to happen. After all, it is your command.'

And when he saw that this did not do anything he one day questioned the helmsman himself and demanded better food.

The helmsman saw that his own hungry stomach was in danger and flew at Doughty like a tiger.

'Don't interfere in these matters. Rascals like you should be glad to get thole-pins to eat!'

Doughty spoke to the point.

'I have as much right here as any one. I have helped to equip the voyage and I have put my money into it.'

Strong words were followed by strong fists and Sarocold dealt him a few heavy blows. In a blind rage Doughty shouted to Chester:

'Captain Chester! Are we going to allow ourselves to be treated like this by such a rogue? You have the power to bring this fellow to his knees with your sword.'

But the captain did not want to do this, and Doughty was the loser. It is possible that he now sought friends to whom he could complain about the injustice done to him by Drake and that he repeated his earlier claim to equality by hinting at promises in return for their support. But each time he opened his mouth he only made things worse, for he was not at all clear about the conditions on board. He believed he could dispute over right and wrong when it was a question of success or failure. At that time the ships were approaching the fatal Port St. Julian, where some sixty years ago Magellan had had two mutineers hanged. The present situation was too similar not to be commented upon. And when one of the men who well understood life at sea told him outright that Drake would treat mutineers in the same way, the deluded man replied:

'But Drake has not got Magellan's authority. I know what he dare and dare not do. He can hang dogs if he likes, but not men.'

As the *Swan* came up to the squadron all these incidents were reported to Drake. He at once ordered the whole of the cargo of the ship to be transferred to the *Pelican*, the *Swan* to be stripped of its rigging and burnt, so as not to be in danger again of losing the victuals. Then he put

Doughty under a mild form of arrest and again tried to come to some understanding with him. But matters had come to such a head that it was no longer possible to have a peaceful discussion. Doughty demanded nothing less than that Drake should abandon the voyage to the South Sea, and even accused him of gambling with ships and men's lives to satisfy his own ambitions. It was obvious that he was again referring to his powers of command which Drake withheld from him. This absurd claim, connected as it was with the recurring suspicions about his command, put Drake into a boundless rage. After a short dispute he fell upon Doughty. And he even went further. He made his former friend a laughing-stock before all the men and had him bound to the mast by his deadly enemy John Sarocold.

After the punishment, he ordered him to leave his ship and take himself off to the *Christopher* where Sarocold and his friends would keep him in custody. Doughty suspected treachery and refused to do this, for he could not be certain of his life on that ship. Without further argument Drake had a rope loosened from the main-yard and declared that unless he went he would be swung overboard into a boat.

Then Doughty left the ship and his brother went with him.

A few days later a fresh storm broke out and a mist came up and again the ship which had the Doughtys on board vanished. Drake was by now thoroughly convinced that there was magic at work. After three days they found the *Christopher*, and Drake decided to put the brothers under strict arrest and to have them transferred on to a larger ship. He therefore went on board the *Elizabeth*, called the crew together and addressed them thus:

'I am going to send you a couple of evil fellows, for I no longer know what to do with them. They are Thomas Doughty, a regular wicked rascal, a conspirator and mutineer, and his brother, a sorcerer and poisoner such as the world has never seen. I do not know where the fellows have come from, probably from the devil himself. They are my enemies and also yours, and they will ruin the whole voyage if we do not protect ourselves against their practices.

I therefore forbid you to exchange a single word with them. And see to it that they neither have anything to read nor to write with, or they may bewitch you. You know what is ahead of us. If the voyage is successful then the meanest cabin boy will return home as a gentleman. Our ships will overflow with gold. So think of this and do as I bid.'

He then had the two Doughtys brought over to the *Elizabeth* and gave orders for the *Christopher* to be broken up. Shortly after this they met the *Mary*, so that the squadron now consisted of four vessels: the *Pelican*, the *Elizabeth*, the *Marigold* and the *Mary*.

They sailed into Port St. Julian, a bay of bad repute in a desolate and deserted part of the world. The water here was full of small rocky islands, which rose up like sharp turrets, especially in the south. This place meant good protection for the ships, but it was some time before they could find the right anchorage.

Drake, as was his custom, was the first to go on shore; he took his brother with him, also one of the gentlemen called Winterhey, whom he greatly valued, Olivier, the master gunner, John Brewer, the trumpeter, and two other men. They took with them as weapons only an arquebus and a bow and arrows.

They met two Patagonians on the shore, whose huge stature had been described by Magellan. To gain their confidence Drake made them some small presents, and Olivier began a contest with them in archery, where it became evident that the English arrows flew farther than theirs. Meanwhile a third native appeared who had been keeping slightly in the background. He spoke to the other natives in the greatest excitement and seemed to be inciting them against the Englishmen. Winterhey took the bow and in an endeavour to interest him too was about to shoot an arrow, but unfortunately the string of his bow snapped. As soon as the savages saw this they ran back into the bush and began to overwhelm them with arrows, for they now thought the white men were unarmed. Winterhey was especially attacked while he made vain attempts to mend his bow. An arrow hit him in the shoulder and as he turned round another pierced his lung, so that he could only get out of the way with difficulty. The master gunner had immediately prepared the arquebus, which, however, would not fire. As he tried to get it to work and was not under cover he was struck down by an arrow and killed outright. Drake took the position in at a glance and gave rapid orders to run back separately to the boat by jumping from bush to bush, and to pick up the Indian arrows as they went and break them so that their supplies would be spent. He seized the arquebus, which Olivier had flung on to the sand, and he managed to fire at the first assailant, whose bowels were torn out by the shot, so that he bellowed like ten oxen. This, together with the noise, helped to quell the other assailants who crept back into the bush as quickly as they could. The Englishmen were glad to get away again in their boat.

The following morning a large troop of well-armed men went ashore to search for the master gunner's body and found him stripped of his clothes and an English arrow stuck in his right eye. Winterhey died two days after the adventure. The two unfortunate men were laid together in one grave.

This was a fresh blow for Drake, whose footsteps seemed to be dogged by misfortune, and yet he had not even reached the scene of decisive action. What would it be like if he had to face a real battle ?

Drake realized that he now had to settle his affair with Doughty if his voyage were to be successful. He saw with uncanny clarity what his duty was, when his men found on the shore one day the mouldy remains of the gallows where Magellan's mutineers had been hanged.

One morning Drake gathered his men on one of the many islands of the bay, ordered a table and chairs to be brought and announced that he wished to hold a formal trial. The men grouped themselves round him in a circle. As President he took a seat at the table and ordered Captain Thomas, the commander of the *Marigold*, to sit beside him.

He then had Doughty brought before him and spoke to him :

'Thomas Doughty, you have repeatedly sought to discredit me and to undermine my authority as captain of this squadron to the great hindrance and ruination of this voyage. On this account and other offences I charge you herewith and invite you to clear yourself. If you succeed in this, then we shall be friends as hitherto. If not, then you have deserved death."

Doughty answered simply :

'No one will be able to prove that I have ever said or done any villainy against you.'

Whereupon Drake, according to the English custom, asked him :

'Where and how do you wish to be tried ? '

'In England, and by Her Majesty the Queen's laws.'

'No, Doughty, that cannot be, the trial must take place here.'

'Then, Captain, I trust your commission is good.'

'My commission is good enough, you can rest assured of that.'

'Then I would ask you to let me see it.'

'The devil ! You shall not see it. You hear, gentlemen, this fellow is full of prating.'

Doughty made a gesture with his hand, which Drake thought was a move towards attacking him.

'Up, men ! Bind his arms or he will spring at my throat.'

Doughty was bound.

Fourteen jurymen were appointed ; officers and crew, friends and enemies of the accused. Captain John Winter was their foreman. Drake then unfolded a manuscript on which the accusations had been recorded. These were read out and contained details, which the men already knew : questioning Drake's prerogative as leader, insubordination against orders, disparagement of his authority by asserting that it was not Drake, but Doughty, who had made the voyage possible, suspicion of sorcery and suchlike. There was no really serious accusation. It was a mixture of angry words, Doughty's imprudence, and ship's gossip. Those who wanted to could read much in it, but those who did not want to could ask, Why a penal court should be held at all?

Doughty also felt this and when he was asked if he could disavow the various accusations he shrugged his shoulders.

Then, however, a certain Edward Bright stepped forward. He particularly disliked Doughty, because he had spread detrimental reports about his wife, and he now gave evidence that he had heard Doughty say in Drake's garden in Plymouth that the Queen and the Privy Council were open to bribery. This could be taken as directed against Drake, who had tried to hush up his piracy by presents to the Queen and influential people at Court. In any case the accusation was serious enough. It was an offence against the Sovereign.

'Well, friend, how do you like that?' shouted Bright to Doughty.

'What should I say to such slander?' replied Doughty. 'You know that such familiarity never existed between you and me that I should discuss such matters with you. And if I have ever said anything of the sort then I meant that if we brought home gold we should be the better welcome.'

The trial proceeded. Then the question turned to the beginning of the voyage because Doughty had maintained that it was he who had recommended Drake to Leicester and Walsingham.

'Lord Burghley knew about the voyage too,' said Doughty, thinking he was playing a trump card.

'Lord Burghley knew nothing of our plans,' retorted Drake, who had advised the Queen to keep Burghley in ignorance since he was the leader of the peace party.

'He knows everything,' said Doughty emphatically.

'Then may I ask through whom?' Drake asked with great surprise.

'Through me,' answered Doughty, who by this probably wanted to show that he had the protection of an influential man.

Drake was dumbfounded for an instant, and then suddenly everything became clear to him. Everything fitted: the difficulties at the outset of the voyage, the undisciplined words, the quarrelling with the crew, the frequent disappearance of the ships, the objection to go with him to the South Sea, the attempts to wrest the command from him, the wish to be tried in London; Doughty was the secret agent of Lord Burghley and the peace party and held their order to thwart the voyage.

He jumped up as if he had been stabbed, and cried:

'You see now, gentlemen, what this fellow has done! God brings his treachery to light. Her Majesty gave me strict injunctions not to tell the Chancellor anything about our object. And now he knows. This fellow has betrayed himself.'

The moment he had spoken Doughty regretted his words. He was quite confused, and again asked, but this time quite timidly, to be tried in England, which only gave the impression that he was conscious of his guilt, and of course he was again refused.

Drake then ordered the jury to be sworn in and handed the indictment to the foreman of the jury that they might withdraw and seek for the right. One of them, however, Leonard Vicary, a lawyer and particular friend of Doughty, protested against the legality of the whole proceedings.

Drake answered him rudely:

'I will have nothing to do with crafty lawyers. To the devil with your laws. I know my own business.'

And Vicary:

'I declare that neither I nor any one of the jury has the right to pass a sentence of death.'

'Nor do you need to. You only have to deal with him alive. Judge whether he is guilty or no. Leave the rest to me!'

The jury went aside and after a short deliberation pronounced him guilty. It was only the authenticity of Bright's evidence which made them hesitate.

'I maintain that Bright spoke the truth,' asserted Drake.

He then stood up and invited the whole assembly with the exception of the two Doughtys to follow him along the shore. Here, by bringing forward letters from Essex, Hatton, and Walsingham he tried to prove the truth of his evidence and the legality of his powers of command, but he did not show them the special commission from the Queen, which made him a judge over life and death. Also, he would not allow the letters out of his hands and only held them up in the air. Once again he showed his men how harmful Doughty's behaviour had been to the voyage and said they would not achieve anything and would all perish if this were to continue and Doughty were not convicted. He ended with these words :

'And, therefore, those who consider this man guilty and deserving of death let them hold up their hands with me. Those who do not believe he should die, let them keep their hands down.'

Not a single hand remained down.

Drake strode back to his judge's seat and solemnly advised Doughty of the sentence of death, but added that if he knew of any remedy of how he could be saved then he should name it.

Doughty asked that he be put down on the coast of Peru.

'I cannot be responsible to the Queen for that,' replied Drake, 'but I will see what I can do if some one will go bail for you.'

Doughty looked at Captain Winter and asked him to stand bail for him, to which Winter agreed.

Then Drake turned to the crew and announced :

'Captain Winter will go bail for the person of the condemned. I accept the security, but I declare that we must drop our enterprise and without having achieved our object we must return home, for with Doughty on board I cannot lead you against the Spaniards for I would not vouch for success. If you wish to return then I am ready.'

There was silence for a moment. Some of them were not unwilling to turn back home, but a couple of adventurers, who, having once taken to plundering, had nothing to gain by returning home if they did not bring back some gold with them, cried out :

'We want to go on. We have not done anything yet. Let us go on!'

And these two rogues carried everything before them.

Drake now got what he wanted. He stood up, exhorted Doughty to prepare for death and concluded the sitting with a pious 'God be merciful to the sinner.'

Doughty was granted a day in which to make final preparations. He did this calmly and with absolute composure. Drake asked him how he wished to meet death and suggested, if we are to believe an altogether biassed witness, that he should stand before a cannon which Drake would discharge. Thus one gentleman would die at the hands of another gentleman. Doughty refused this noble offer and preferred the type of death which at that time was considered to be good taste in English society: he wished to be beheaded. During the last minutes the two friends seemed to be reconciled at least outwardly. Doughty showed no hatred of any sort, but behaved like a true gentleman. On the last day he even took communion with Drake. After that they both ate at the same table and drank each other's health. Then they had a short talk, but nothing is known of what transpired.

The bailiff then arrived with halberd and stock-bearers and led Doughty to the execution place, where the ships' crews had gathered. Drake walked by his side.

Doughty knelt down before the block and prayed for England and his Queen. He then stood up, took leave of every one and asked Drake to forgive all those who had fallen into disrepute on his account. Then he called across to the crew that if any of them felt injured by anything he had done to them, they should forgive him.

Then he turned to the executioner with a jest:

'Now like Sir Thomas More I can truly say it brings you little honour to cut off my head for my neck is so short.'

He laid his head on the block. The executioner struck a blow and the head rolled on to the sand.

Drake ordered it to be picked up and held up in the air.

'See,' he cried, 'this is the end of all traitors!'

Thus ends the tragic story of his friendship, which seems to cast a dark shadow over Drake. But the accounts of the old seamen who witnessed it are only accurate in parts, for they have so many gaps and are on the whole so partial that it is difficult to discover the true facts of the case. Yet there is no visible reason why Drake should have pushed the matter to such extremes when it was not a question of its being or not being his enterprise. It seems more likely that Doughty was in the pay of men who intended to ruin the voyage; it may have been Lord Burghley or some other man who was at the back of it. In that case, Drake only did his duty as a commander.

The quarrelling and discontent which Doughty had sown were not quelled, however, with his death. Opposition became even greater. Doughty's calm behaviour had made a great impression on the educated participators in the voyage. Drake's witnesses were not the most reliable men, he seemed to be a heartless tyrant and to all appearances was no gentleman. Doughty's followers no longer felt their own lives were safe. The sailors also behaved most insolently and annoyed the gentlemen whenever they could by speaking of Drake's partiality.

Drake had to make a clean sweep.

One Sunday he ordered them all to come to confession, to take communion, and to gather on the shore in front of his tent. After the crews had arrived, Drake appeared and ordered the two captains, Winter and Thomas, to stand at his side.

Fletcher, the ship's chaplain, thought he was to begin divine service, but Drake brushed him to one side.

'Stop that, Fletcher, I want to preach to-day.' And he began:

'Gentlemen, I know I am a poor preacher for I have never learnt to do this, but what I shall say let each man mark and firmly record in his memory. We are all here far from our country and surrounded by enemies. Each one of us, therefore, counts as two men and if we lose one we cannot provide another, not even if we were to pay a thousand pounds for him. Disputes and quarrelling must therefore cease. God knows, there is such wrangling and bickering among you, gentlemen and sailors, that it makes one ill to think of it. And yet gentlemen and sailors must pull together. I should like to see the man who would not put his hands to a rope at a time of distress. He is not among us. These gentlemen were recommended to me by the Government; that is why I took them on board. I also had my own particular reasons for doing so. Therefore, they must stay here. And I know that sailors are the most refractory and obstinate people in the world, but I cannot manage without them. Thus, only one thing is possible: to put an end to quarrelling. Whoever does not agree to this or has had enough of the voyage let him send in his name. I can very well spare a ship, I will place the *Marigold* fully equipped at the disposal of those who do not wish to go any farther and then they can safely journey home. But I warn them not to cross my path. I would sink them without any mercy.'

Drake paused and waited for an answer. No one offered his name as wanting to return. Then he asked them again and this time addressed his crew in particular:

'Will you, or will you not, remain of your own free will?'

They all chose to remain.

And after having in this way brought all the men on to his side he turned to the officers and surprised them all by depriving them of their rank. To their astonished question on what grounds he did this, he answered sharply:

'I see no reason why I should not do this.'

And once again he spoke of Doughty. At one time Doughty had been as his right hand, but he had betrayed the voyage and therefore he could not have acted otherwise. He swore he would not have any other man executed, although he knew of several who deserved the same death. And he named these men. Then he again put before them the purpose of the voyage and ended by saying:

'See what we have done! We have provoked three crowned heads against each other, Her Majesty the Queen the King of Spain, and the King of Portugal. And if our enterprise goes to the devil then we shall not only reap derision and scorn, but it will be an eternal disgrace for our country, and never again will such a voyage be equipped. What a triumph for the Spaniards and the Portuguese!'

His last words were greeted by enthusiastic cheers from the officers and men. Drake felt he had touched the right note. Discipline seemed to be established once again. He reinstated the officers and he dismissed the assembly.

A few days later, the squadron was sailing towards the famous Straits of Magellan. Drake knew what he was risking. So far no one had ever completed this journey without loss. The discoverer himself had not returned from his voyage. Like him, one of his followers had been murdered and others were wrecked. Amerigo Vespucci had not even found the entrance to the Straits. Old sailors thought the Straits were bewitched. The devil and his black flock crouched there and let loose a pack of storm spirits against each intruder, whom they threw back into the sea. The simple account of the first travellers had long become a fable. Tierra del Fuego, the dark land on whose shores Magellan saw countless fires burning and whose rugged mountains were always overhung with dark, threatening clouds, had become a hell, and the bottomless Straits had turned into the Styx whose banks swarmed with giants and hideous animals. The sailor shuddered at the thought of passing through the Straits. Mutiny was the rule here.

Drake had nothing more to fear.

After three days' sailing they noticed a narrow strip on the horizon, which lay like a straight beam across the water.

It was Cape Virgenes, as Magellan had called it in honour of eleven thousand virgins on whose day, the 21st of October, he had discovered it. It was an elongated sand rock, which indicated the entrance to the Straits and on approaching nearer to it the sun shone down so brightly on to it that its steep slopes could be seen. Tender grass covered it, and, below, the sea raged over the last fragments of the Cordilleras.

They sailed round the light green sandbank, which extended south-east from the Cape, and then they entered the Straits, Drake ordered the flags to be hoisted and the pennants to fly in honour of his Queen. He rechristened his flagship the *Pelican* and called it the *Golden Hind* in honour of his patron Hatton, who had a large share in the expedition and in whose coat of arms there was a golden hind.

This world of terror greeted the ship with open arms. She was embraced to starboard by the narrow arm of Cape Virgenes and to larboard by Cape Espiritu Santo, which was the end of a long chain of mountains, which originated in Fireland. Before them stretched the emerald green waves that rolled under white foam to the distant shores. Whales, seals, dogfish peopled the waters ; the shore was teeming with albatross, seagulls, petrels, ducks, and geese.

Little was seen for the present of the mighty world of mountains which Magellan's people had described. To the north there stretched waste pampas to a land where a glowing sun shone all day and which gleamed towards evening with all colours of the rainbow, only to be flooded with dark purple at sunset. To the south lay Fireland, which the scientists then thought was part of an unknown *terra australis* and which they, in some remarkable way, linked up with New Guinea. After four days, they turned sharply to the south. The pampas disappeared, and instead they saw snow and ice-clad peak after peak projecting into the cloudy sky.

Fireland now looked more primeval and magnificent. Giants of ice looked down upon the astonished sailors from a majestic height. Huge glaciers and a multitude of raging mountain torrents came plunging down their slopes through the virgin forests into the sea, leaving only a narrow strip of shells on the shore. All the plant life seemed to be stunted, bent or suppressed, but not conquered, for it resisted the tempest which was born in the ice of the South Pole and howled ceaselessly over it.

The wind was so icy cold that the sailors' fingers became numb on the ropes and the helmsman could not calculate his bearings as he tried to find a way through the gaps between the great mountains. They were often thrown back great distances in one hour, which they could not make up for days. Sometimes, the wind whistled out of three gaps at once, the dark waters would be covered with a silver grey foam and would sweep the rain and snow before them, and in an instant the ships were enveloped in fog, which robbed them of visibility. The sails flapped on the topmast, the ropes rattled, the planks groaned, and the waves danced round the ship in the wildest tornado, rooting up the bowels of the ocean, as though they wanted to swallow every living soul on board the squadron.

Now they were really in the terrible Straits of Magellan, which had taken Magellan thirty days to sail through. And it became worse as they sailed round the majestic Cape Froward from where the Straits stretched out towards the Pacific in a north-westerly direction. The landscape here was like a fjord. The ice-capped steep walls fell precipitously into the water and came so close to each other that sailing became a sheer impossibility. The Straits now became a giant crevasse. Snow, hail, rain, and storms were daily to be faced. The shores dissolved into a confused archipelago, which seemed to be divided by endless channels broken up into bays and narrows.

The seventeenth day after their entrance, however, the squadron greeted the open South Sea with loud rejoicing.

Magellan had crossed the ocean from here in the finest weather, and he had called it the *Pacific* on account of its gentle mood. But for Drake and his men the *mare pacificum* became a *mare furiosum*. For two days they kept to the north-west until a violent north-easter caught them and threw them completely out of their course. Powerless, they sailed west-south-west into an unknown sea. The wind rose to a hurricane and transformed the ocean as far as they could see into a raging mass. The crew, who had hoped that by passing through the Straits they had left the worst behind them, almost despaired. For weeks they had been sailing thither. An eclipse of the moon made them believe the weather would change. But the power of the storm was doubly intense. The sky hung black as though they were sailing into eternal night.

One night the watch on the *Golden Hind* heard a wild yell and the following morning the *Marigold* had vanished and was never seen again. Edward Bright, the treacherous witness against Doughty, went down with her. Doughty's friends whispered, 'God's vengeance!'

They sighted no land for a whole month. Then they sailed towards the west coast of Fireland, which here resolved itself into rocks and channels. They managed to cast anchor near to one of the islands, but only a few hours later they were caught in a raging squall. The cable of the *Golden Hind* was broken and the ship was again thrust out to sea. The *Elizabeth* let slip her rope and anchor. The terrible dance began all over again. Drake soon lost sight of the *Elizabeth* and did not see her again during the rest of the voyage. Captain Winter sheltered from the storms in the Magellan Straits and waited there for Drake, although Drake had fixed another rallying point on the Chilean coast. He had no wish to pursue the voyage; he complained later of Drake's tyranny and declared he had feared the same fate for himself as Doughty's. After a time, as Drake did not appear, he ordered the ship to be put about and sailed back to England against the wish of his crew. After many vicissitudes he landed in England.

The *Golden Hind* was thrown southward out of her course. They made their way through the jagged coast, and as the weather improved they cast anchor, and the exhausted and scurvy-ridden sailors revived with the fresh water. But they were soon at the mercy of the storm again. Another anchor with rope was lost. And a boat containing eight men carrying only sufficient provisions for a day went out to reconnoitre and was never seen again. These eight men fought their way back through the Straits of Magellan until they came to the mouth of the La Plata river where all except one, John Carter, were killed by the Indians. He managed to escape to the Portuguese and after nine years he returned to England. The chaplain, Fletcher, writes about the storm thus:

'It was as if all the devils of hell had been let loose and had met at one point. The sea writhed like a roll of parchment in flames and the waves swept over like feathers or flakes of snow and rose up into high mountains. No anchor would hold, no sail could be set. The frantically heavy seas, the powerful breakers, the dangerous cliffs, the unbearable howl of the wind, the impossibility to escape from the tumult made us despair of ever being saved.'

It is not certain how far they were forced southward; probably they rounded Cape Horn. If so, Drake could claim to be its real discoverer. Certainly he knew that the theory of *terra australis* was incorrect. It was not a continent, but a series of islands.

Here, in the furthermost south, the storm such as no traveller had experienced since the Flood, subsided after having raged for fifty-two days. Drake cast anchor by one of the islands and went ashore. He went to the southernmost point of land, which rose high above the sea and, compass in hand, he confirmed that there was no land to be seen farther south. He threw himself on to the ground and crept up to the edge of the precipice so that he hung half over it, and he told his men on board that no man had ever had more southerly ground beneath him.

The voyage now lay straight ahead of them. He granted two days' rest to his exhausted crew and then sailed northwest with a favourable wind behind him. When they reached the Chilean coast Drake steered farther out to sea so as not to be discovered too soon, and found on the island La Mocha a pleasant land after such a rough voyage. There were huts and gardens along the shore, and they could take in water and provisions.

That evening Drake went ashore in a boat and started negotiations with the natives. He brought back some fruit and two sheep. The Indians seemed to be friendly and obliging. He then explained to them that he would return the following day for water and to barter for further provisions. He was shown the wells and then rowed back to the ship.

Early the following morning he rowed there again in his boat and had a large number of men with him. His gunner, Long Niels, a Dane, was amongst them, also his musician

John Brewer, and Diego the negro. As the natives seemed to be well disposed they had only armed themselves with bucklers and broadswords.

As they landed Drake noticed that the Indians did not appear at once. He therefore remained cautiously behind with most of his men in the boat and only sent two of them with barrels to the wells.

They had scarcely got half-way before they were attacked on all sides and dragged away amid yells and blows.

At the same moment a shower of arrows whirled out of an ambush on to the men, who were waiting by the boat. The effect was indescribable. Almost all of them were hit, and most of them with several arrows at once. Drake was hit by an arrow just below the right eye. Long Niels was shot through the chest and fell to the ground at once. John Brewer and Diego were bleeding profusely.

They jumped back into the boat and dragged in the seriously wounded Dane. Then they attempted to push off. Hundreds of Indians fell upon them. Some seized the ropes, others tried to snatch the oars or knock them out of the men's hands. Most of them leaped about shrieking and yelling, brandishing shields and spears, thrusting and striking.

Terror and confusion came over the Englishmen. The badly wounded men lay half-conscious and doubled up with pain at the bottom of the boat. Shields and broadswords were of no use. Drake gave excited orders to get the boat afloat, but the ground was stony and the breakers were strong. They pushed in vain with the oars. All of them most certainly would have perished had not the simplest among them had the sense to cut the rope to which the Indians were hanging.

They were afloat. They rowed back to the ship with the two remaining oars and arrived with hearts beating and a boat full of blood.

Drake immediately ordered an armed division to go and free the prisoners, but by now the shore was swarming with natives and more and more kept coming. He deliberated : was he to risk his whole voyage when he was so near to success ? He ordered his men to turn back and the two wretched fellows who had gone to fetch the water were left to their fate, if they were not already dead. The crew begged him at least to fire a broadside into the village as retaliation, but he refused and put the blame on to the Spaniards, who had incited the Indians through bad treatment. The wounded gunner died, also brave Diego, who had been Drake's trusted servant ever since Nombre de Dios.

That same afternoon they sailed along the coast to seek a more friendly harbour.

They met a pair of Indian fishermen from whom they bought chickens, eggs, and a fat pig. They showed the natives that this was not sufficient, and as they were mistaken for Spaniards the natives promised to lead them to a harbour where they would find provisions in plenty. In all innocence they guided the *Golden Hind* straight into the arms of the Spaniards at Valparaiso.

Drake now stood at the goal of his ambitions. The first blow was to be struck here, for this was the beginning of the coast along which the galleons carried their gold. But what had the voyage to this place cost ? Of the five proud ships with which he had put out to sea from Plymouth a year ago he now had only his flagship. The crew had shrunk to less than half its original number. Mutiny, illness, storms and misfortunes had damped their adour. Nevertheless, Drake was full of confidence. So far nothing had occurred to betray his presence to the enemy. Like a thief in the night he stole into a rich treasure-house whose guards were asleep, for they believed they were as safe as in Abraham's bosom. They were on their guard against him on the east coast, but they never dreamt he would repeat Magellan's bold enterprise.

In those days Valparaiso, the port of Santiago, consisted of only a few houses.

It was evening as the *Golden Hind* appeared in the bay and slowly reefed her sails. A single Spanish ship rolled at anchor. It was *Los Reyes*, the *Great Captain of the South Sea*, as she was called, because sailing in her eleven years ago Mendana had discovered the Salomo Island and had thus extended Spanish rule over the whole of the South Sea.

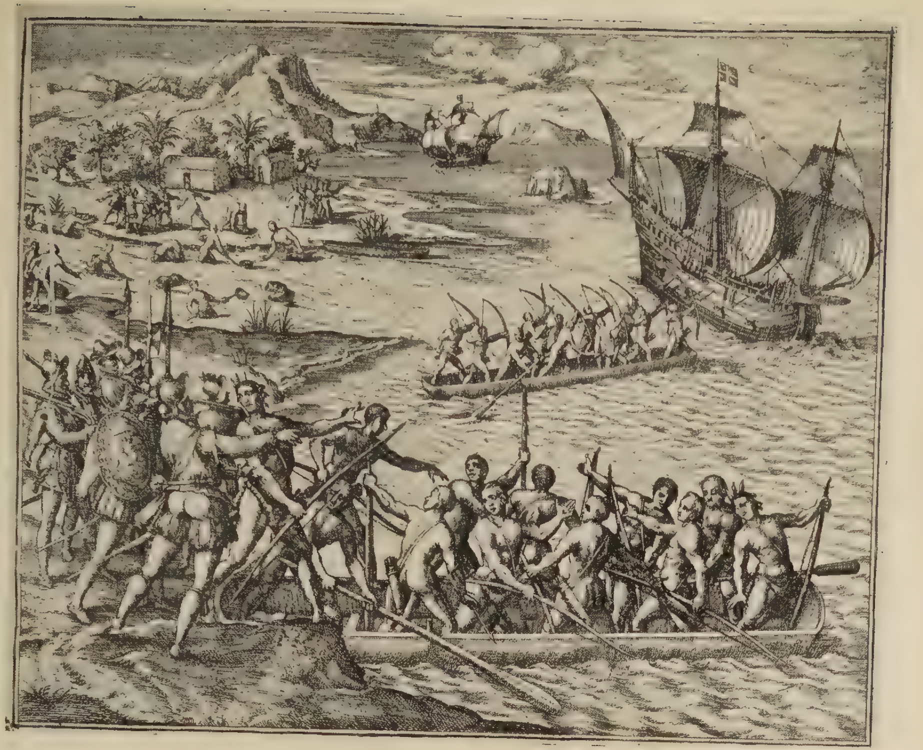
She had eight Spaniards and three negroes on board. When they noticed the *Golden Hind* they thought she was a Spanish vessel and prepared to receive her in a proper manner. They rolled a cask of Chile wine up on deck, tapped it, and joyfully waved their caps and raised glasses in the air. One of them beat a drum.

The Englishmen approached them in a boat and climbed undeterred on deck, where Thomas Moon knocked one of the tipplers over with a ' Down, you dog ! ' in answer to his toast.

The rest stood dumb with astonishment as though the devil incarnate stood before them and then meekly allowed themselves to be locked up below deck. Only one of them calmly jumped overboard and swam with long strokes to shore to give the alarm.

Drake's men saw people running out of their houses and discussing excitedly together and then flying to the hills for refuge. When Drake went ashore he found no one in the houses, which he thoroughly searched as well as the sheds. They did not find any gold, but they found many provisions, wine, flour, salt beef, bacon, and lard, most of which they transferred to the *Golden Hind*. Also the church was made to pay. Drake took the silver communion cups and a costly altar-cloth and handed them over to the chaplain, Fletcher, for divine service. The *Great Captain* was then towed out of the harbour and plundered. That yielded more than anything. The booty was twenty-five thousand pesos of fine Valdivia gold worth £80,000 sterling, as well as a golden cross set with emeralds. Drake kept the prize, and manned her with his own men after having set the Spaniards on shore.

Thus the victualling was fully provided for. Following a chart which they found on the *Great Captain* they continued their voyage to the north and searched everywhere for the *Elizabeth* because Drake had fixed this latitude with Captain Winter as a rallying-point and he had no idea that Winter



AN ATTACK BY INDIANS

From an Engraving

had already returned to England. Nor did he think that the vessel could have been shipwrecked.

Both ships cast anchor in the Bay of La Herradura and they sent men ashore for water. While these men searched for a well the men on the ships suddenly heard the report of an arquebus from the shore. Drake ordered the coast to be watched from the crow's-nest and he himself noticed some sixty Spanish riders and a number of Indians running at their side like dogs and all of them making for the place where his men were searching for water. He immediately signalled danger warnings to his men and pointed to a rock in the sea to which they should wade, while he would send a boat to fetch them from there. They did as he suggested with the exception of one man, Richard Minivy, who walked slowly and jeered at the others for decamping. The riders chased after him and seized him while he was still on the shore. He defended himself bravely and shot one Spaniard off his horse, but was himself shot dead just as he was wading through the breakers. The Indians dragged his corpse on to the shore where the Spaniards beheaded him. They also struck off his right hand and tore out his heart. Then they triumphantly carried his head on a spear while the Indians stuck arrows into his body, which was left on the sand. As soon as the assailants had disappeared Drake went ashore with a group of men and buried the reckless fellow. They were surprised to see that the arrows were all made of green wood, and concluded from this that the Spaniards only allowed the Indians to carry weapons on certain occasions. The arrows had only been cut at the moment of the unexpected attack.

Slightly to the north in Salado Bay Drake found a place where he could stay a little longer. The *Golden Hind* was careened, thoroughly cleaned, tarred, and rigged afresh. The guns were brought on deck and everything was prepared for battle. They assembled a pinnace whose parts they had brought with them from England, and Drake undertook an expedition in it to look again for Winter whose crew he needed so badly. Spanish troops came and watched the preparations from a distance, but no one ventured against the pirates. As Drake could not find any trace of the *Elizabeth* there was nothing left for him to do but to set to work alone instead of with the five ships. After an interval of forty days he weighed anchor.

He roved to the north from harbour to harbour, searching everywhere for water, provisions, and gold. In the mouth of the Pisagua River in the province of Tarapaca one landing party found a Spaniard fast asleep on the shore with thirteen bars of silver to the value of 4,000 ducats by his side.

'We let him have his little sleep and did not want to disturb his dreams,' says pious Fletcher, 'but when he awoke against our wishes we relieved him of his burden, which would otherwise have kept him awake, so that now he could continue to snore in peace.'

In another place they met a Spaniard with an Indian lad driving eight llamas, each of which was carrying on its back a sack of fifty pounds of fine silver. The affable preacher continues:

'We could not bear to see a Spanish gentleman degrading himself as a cattle driver, so, uninvited, we offered to drive the llamas for him. Unfortunately he did not give us the right directions, so we lost ourselves with the burden and found ourselves in our boats!'

The gold and silver put the crew into good spirits, which not even the strict servant of the Church could avoid.

Drake hoped to find particularly good booty in Arica, the export harbour of the famous Potosi mines, and he was not deceived. Two barques lay in the harbour in the safe charge of a single negro. In one they found forty bars of silver, each bar as large as a brick and weighing twenty pounds.

'We relieved them of the trouble of transport and afflicted ourselves with it,' says Fletcher.

The small town on the coast was content with the usual alarm of beating the drums and bell-ringing, together with a faint attempt at defence. No one, however, ventured out against the Englishmen, who sent them a few greetings in advance from their largest guns and in the evening celebrated their success. Their yelling and cheering resounded from the ship and was heard throughout the town. Drake ordered a cask of Chilean wine to be tapped. The band struck up and the crew danced about on deck.

The following morning they hurried on, for Drake had heard from a captured negro that a ship laden with silver was sailing ahead of him. They overtook her in Chute Bay, north-west of Arica. But they were too late. Her captain had got wind of them and had taken his cargo of five hundred bars of gold ashore, where it was guarded by troops, who had been rapidly summoned. Only the empty vessel fell into the Englishmen's hands. They towed her out to sea, set all her sails and then let her float adrift. They did the same with the *Great Captain*, which they had so far brought along with them.

This was a sore disappointment, and Drake had to hurry to reach Callao, the harbour of the capital Lima, before the alarm reached there, otherwise he would lose still more.

A few miles from Callao they were fortunate in capturing a ship which had just come out from the harbour. It is true there were no treasures on her, but they heard the good news that another ship carrying silver, the *Nuestra Señora del Valle* under Captain Miguel Angel was lying in Callao harbour.

It was dark when the *Golden Hind* entered Callao Bay.

The harbour was full of ships whose masts stood out dark and powerful in the moonlight.

The freebooter sailed in among them and noiselessly cast anchor.

There was nothing to be seen on the ships, neither a watch nor any lights. They appeared to be completely abandoned. Their sails were dismantled and evidently taken ashore. All the town was wrapped in silence.

The boat and the pinnace were quietly filled with armed men, who rowed to the nearest boat that was lying motionless and sprang on board. They found a couple of Spaniards asleep in a cabin. They woke them up and questioned them about Miguel Angel's ship. Terrified, the sailors immediately pointed her out to the men. Then they crossed over to the ship and searched her. But she was completely empty and they heard from the overawed prisoners that the whole flotilla was without cargo. All the silver was still on land. This was another terrible blow for Drake, who had set his greatest hopes on Lima, for he no longer dared to attack Panama with his weakened crew.

The only advantage was that he received news from the prisoners about matters in Europe ; he learnt too that there were a few of his own countrymen in Lima, who had to account for themselves before the Inquisition. Drake immediately guessed that they were none other than Oxenham and his men. And it actually was Oxenham. The two friends who had promised each other that day up in the tree in the Cordilleras to sail the South Sea together were now actually there. But in what circumstances ! One as a helpless prisoner of the Inquisition and a candidate for the funeral pyre : the other a free pirate with great hopes of booty. Drake could not save the poor man, who was executed a few weeks later.

This was sad news.

But there came news which opened out a brighter prospect. Fourteen days ago the *Navio del Oro* or the *Nuestra Señora de la Conception*, or the *Glory of the South Sea*, as she was romantically christened, was supposed to have left Callao for Panama. This information made Drake's heart beat faster. The project seemed hopeless enough, but he had heard that the golden bird was to put in at Paita on the way. If she did so, then Drake could hope to overtake her. And then his work would be done. He would be able to sail home in full confidence. His boldest dreams would have been fulfilled.

He immediately made up his mind and hurried his men, who were still rummaging about in the boats. He ordered them to shift the sails of all the Spanish vessels and to slip the anchor ropes so that they would sail out to sea and no one would be able to follow them.

While this was being done a ship was reported to him out at sea, which rapidly approached them in the darkness and cast anchor close beside the *Golden Hind*.

By calling across they ascertained that she came from Panama.

At the same time a revenue cutter pushed off from the shore, and came alongside the *Golden Hind.*

‘Who are you ?’ they called.

‘*Nuestra Señora del Valle,* Captain Miguel Angel,’ Drake made one of his prisoners answer.

Whereupon one of the Spaniards swung himself on board, but when the barrel of a 120-pounder suddenly stared him in the face he soon disappeared again. Oars rattled against the ship’s walls and with desperate strokes the boat set off. A noiseless volley of arrows flew after him. The noise and the rapidly vanishing boat alarmed the Panama sailer. They cut her cable as rapidly as possible and tried to get out to sea. Drake decided to make a good prize and sent the pinnace after them. But she was badly received. An arquebus flashed out on the ship and one of the oarsmen was shot. The pinnace returned to Drake.

Meanwhile, he had weighed anchor, hoisted the sails and steered after the runaway. When he was within firing range he drove a cannon ball into her ribs. The ship lay to at once, her crew flung themselves into a boat and rowed ashore. Drake then boarded her full of hope, but was again fooled. He found nothing of any importance.

It was nearly morning, and the pirates would gladly have flown like eagles after the golden pheasant, but it takes time to do things well. There was a calm, the grey sea lay before them like a mirror, and in despair Drake looked at the pennants and sails, which hung slack on the masts. It was only the current that took them slightly forward. The *Golden Hind* and the Panama sailer, which Drake had manned with a few of his own men, slowly drifted past the small island of San Lorenzo that lay before the Bay.

A disorderly noise broke out in the town. The bells rang out and were re-echoed far inland. The Viceroy in Lima would certainly hear of it and bring up his troops.

A boat in the distance seemed to be observing the movements of the Englishmen.

Towards midday, the wind rose slightly and Drake suddenly saw two ships sail out of the harbour, well manned and sailing with full sails. Something had to be done at once.

Drake tried a stratagem. He had promised to set the captured Spaniards ashore because of the readiness with which they had given him information. He therefore had them put into the pinnace and rowed across to the prize with instructions to call his own men off and to sail away. The pinnace lay alongside the prize, but not a single Englishman got into her. Drake became impatient, and cursed the men and continued to wait in vain.

One of the pursuing ships had already reached the open sea before him and the *Golden Hind* was in danger of being cut off. The raging captain quickly made up his mind. He jumped into the boat and cursed the men so violently that they got into the pinnace with lightning speed.

As soon as they were on board the flagship, Drake ordered all sails to be set and sailed away, while the Panama ship whose sails had been removed drifted helplessly to shore.

The stratagem was successful. As soon as the Spaniards saw the drifting ship was in danger they immediately turned to bring her into safety and possibly to learn further particulars about the strength and arms of the pirates. Meanwhile, the *Golden Hind* sailed away undisturbed. She flew with full sails towards the north-west, but all day she had the Spaniards behind her. However, the distance between them was rapidly increased and the next day they had disappeared.

The hind was free of the hounds. A good wind swelled her sails, and she moved out over the ocean, all eyes turned to her bow. The helmsman grasped his helm more firmly and the look-out kept a sharper watch.

But the following morning it was again calm. The impatient men took to the oars and dragged the heavy boat in tow. A small frigate fell into their hands, but so as not to lose any time they left her and the cargo. They asked her about the *Nuestra Señora de la Conception* and heard that she was only three days ahead of them. A cheer broke out at the good news.

Two days later they ran into Paita where they had to anchor. They fell upon the first barque, which lay in front of them and learnt that the bird had flown and had put out to sea two days ago. So now they were only one day ahead. That was a consolation. The *Glory of the South Sea* could hardly escape them now. But they also heard that they would need to prepare for a fight, for she had guns on board against any emergency in these seas. She was known along the whole of the coast as the *Cacafuego*, or the *Spitfire* in English.

That afternoon they continued the chase and sailed forward in a long line so as not to miss their prey. The pinnace sailed so that she was still in sight of the shore, while the flagship sailed in sight of the pinnace but farther out to sea.

The impatience and eagerness of the crew had risen to the highest pitch, especially as a battle was probably before them. Drake had promised a golden chain to the man who first sighted the *Spitfire*. This idea particularly thrilled the three cabin boys of the *Golden Hind*. They would hardly come down from the crow's-nest.

The next morning they reported, 'Ship ahoy!' Like them, she was making for Panama. They immediately set upon her and boarded her.

It was not the *Spitfire*, but a sailing vessel from Guayaquil, which was laden with rigging, sails, anchors and other ship's supplies for the Spanish navy in the Philippines.

Time pressed, but the cargo was too valuable for a seaman to let it go. Drake ordered the prize to be taken in tow, and intended to plunder it during the voyage. He took what he could make use of and threw the rest overboard. But as they also found 20,000 pesos in gold and silver on board they searched for more. The supercargo swore by all that was holy that there was nothing more and proved this by his papers, but the crew, who were nearly all negroes, maintained the opposite. The supercargo retorted that the negroes were lying, and the argument went on until

Drake lost patience and had the supercargo hoisted aloft from the mainyard and, for confirmation of his evidence, had him ducked. He was fished up on board again, spluttering and soaking wet, but he kept to what he had said. Then the negroes were dealt with because they had lied. They were dragged over the capstan and beaten, so that truth and lies were equally rewarded. Then they put the negroes ashore. They left the captain and two other Spaniards on board the ship, from which they removed the sails and rigging. They threw the sails and rigging overboard, so that the ship could only drift slowly towards Panama and would not be able to give warning there in time.

After that, nothing appeared for days. The *Hind* was approaching Cape San Francisco.

The look-out reported another sail. The vessel was chased and offered resistance. A discharge of guns soon made her docile.

Again no *Spitfire*.

But the booty was 150,000 pesos, and they also received the good news that the ship they were chasing was only a few sea miles ahead of them.

The wind was good. Drake ordered all sails to be set.

A few hours later, John Drake, Francis Drake's page and nephew, shouted down from the crow's-nest:

'Ship ahoy!'

All eyes turned intently towards the horizon.

Then they all shouted as if possessed:

'It is she, it is she!'

From the description it actually was the vessel they were chasing.

She was sailing calmly and innocently on her way.

The crew rejoiced on board the *Golden Hind.*

They leaped about and threw their caps in the air and triumphantly dragged the boy to Drake, who gave him the chain.

All cares, strife and quarrels were forgotten.

They were in the open sea, alone with the treasure which would satisfy kingdoms.

And now all the cabin-boys would be gentlemen, and the gentlemen would become great lords. The long voyage was almost at an end.

But Drake checked the enthusiasm. It was only midday and he did not want to attack his dangerous adversary until the evening.

But his ship was sailing well and would soon catch up with her. If he were to reef his sails he would arouse suspicion. He therefore used an old pirate trick to reduce his speed. He had wine casks filled with water and hung over the ship to stern and these trailed after her.

Meanwhile, they cleared the deck for action.

Towards evening they steered on to the unsuspecting victim.

Don Juan de Anton, the captain of the *Nuestra Señora*, had long observed the stranger and thought she was a Chilean vessel, but when he saw the manœuvre he imagined the ship wanted to give him some information. He therefore ordered his men to put the ship about and sailed towards the *Golden Hind*.

Drake then let the casks loose, crossed the Spaniards' course and shot up alongside of them.

Don Juan saluted him, but his salute remained unanswered. Instead, he saw to his horror a number of grappling irons stretching out to his vessel. Ropes were thrown up on deck. Voices rang out.

'We are English. Haul down your sails!'

And then once again a clear and distinct voice:

'Down with your sails, Don Juan de Anton, or else we shall sink you!'

'The devil take you English!' shouted the Spaniard, who had understood; 'come across yourselves and haul them down!'

A shrill whistle sounded aft on the pirate ship. A trumpet signal. A salvo from sixty arquebuses and a hail of arrows swept over the *Señora's* deck. A big gun flashed out a shot and knocked her mizen overboard together with sails and main-mast.

And another deafening cannon-shot.

'Haul down your sails!'

Then suddenly a number of men swarmed over deck as though they had risen from the sea. They were from the pinnace, which had come up unnoticed on the other side of the ship.

The Spanish crew, who had tried to free their vessel from the iron hooks, fled like the wind below deck and Captain Anton was left alone.

The pirates fell upon him and demanded roughly:

'Where's the captain?'

He did not answer.

Then they seized him and dragged him, pale and shivering, across to Drake, who was already taking off his helmet and coat of mail. Drake tapped his shoulder kindly:

'Calm yourself, my friend; such is life.'

And he had him brought aft to a cabin and put under guard.

The capture was a wonderful success. No blood had been shed. The *Spitfire* had done little honour to her name. It turned out that there were absolutely no big guns on board. Her crew consisted of only twelve sailors and six passengers and they were all as good as unarmed.

Drake ordered his men to turn the ship seaward to get out of the roadstead that they might plunder her in peace. And they sailed throughout the night.

The next morning he went on board the prize and had a lunch served in the midst of his plunder. And all morning they searched the ship.

The booty surpassed all their expectations.

There were thirteen chests full of stamped silver coins, eighty pounds of gold, twenty-six tons of silver, a large quantity of precious stones and valuables. Later on, it was all valued at 400,000 pesos—thousands of pounds.

A regal plunder! And it had been taken from a King. Philip would pluck his beard out from rage.

Chest after chest was taken over to the *Golden Hind*, there to be carefully entered into a book and stowed away.

One of Don Juan's cabin-boys was so astonished on seeing the *Glory of the South Sea* hand over her silver that he let the mournful remark drop that the *Spitfire* had now become a *Spitsilver*.

The English sailors greeted this pertinent witticism with roars of laughter. During the journey home it was often repeated and later it was to be heard all over England.

Drake kept the prize near to him for six days. It was glorious weather at sea. The officers and sailors were in the best of spirits. All their troubles and cares were forgotten.

And the imprisoned Spaniards had nothing to complain about. Don Juan in particular was very well treated by Drake. He invited him to his table and had long conversations with him. He related the whole of the voyage to him and justified himself by the treason of the Viceroy, Don Henriquez, who had caused three hundred Englishmen to lose their lives and Hawkins to lose his fortune. It stood to reason that he had a right to help himself to Philip's treasures. The conversation also turned to Oxenham, and Drake did the only thing possible for his friend. He asked Don Juan to inform the Viceroy of Peru that at the first opportunity he would put two thousand Spaniards to death if he allowed Oxenham to be executed. He also took him over his ship and showed him the whole of the armaments and guns, the provisions and booty. He even exhorted him to inform his Government of what he had seen. Drake was not at all afraid. He discussed the possibilities of the return journey and finally gave him back his ship and told him he was free, that he could go wherever he liked and presented him with a gold tankard as a parting gift, on which his name 'Franciscus Draques' had been engraved. We do not know whether this was done out of chivalry or ridicule.

Thereupon the *Spitsilver* continued her ill-fated journey, 'slightly lighter,' as Fletcher put it.

From that time on, Drake was on his way home. He had achieved his object. He sailed victoriously past the coast where the golden Panama lay and the tree on which he had sworn to take this voyage. Perhaps he was alone on the high quarter-deck and looked thoughtfully over the grey sea towards the tree. He may have thought of the past, of Oxenham and Doughty, of the ups and downs of his own life at sea. Fate had not played him false.

Nothing of any importance happened on the further journey in comparison with the principal event of the voyage. They were on their way home. But which course should they take? It would be dangerous to sail back through the Magellan Straits not only because of storms but on account of Spanish ships they might meet at one or other end of the Straits. The only remaining way was across the Pacific, which meant they would have to sail round the world. Or again, they might attempt to sail round North America. Many English discoverers at that time were occupied with the problem of a north-west passage, and we must therefore give Drake credit for wanting to crown his fortunate voyage with this success. In any case, he steered his course undeterred towards the north. He captured a vessel from the Philippines off the coast of Mexico and seized from it a couple of Spanish charts of the Pacific Ocean. Perhaps that was the turning of the scales, which made him change his course, perhaps it was the adverse winds and unusual cold, which they had to suffer. Whatever it was, as he came into the Bay of San Francisco he suddenly abandoned his voyage to the north and decided to make the *Golden Hind* seaworthy again. And there, where the noise of San Francisco is to be heard to-day, he was welcomed like a god by the wildest Indian tribes and made one of their chiefs at a solemn investiture. Drake modestly accepted the honour and declared them all to be good subjects of Old England. He took possession of their land in the name of Elizabeth and called it New Albion.

He then sailed sixty-eight days over the Pacific until he reached the Moluccas and here he enjoyed the hospitality of the Sultan of Ternate, whose enmity against the Portuguese he made good use of by inviting him to make a formal alliance with England. Of course Drake was too much of a pirate to be a professional politician, but he was also too good an Englishman to be only a pirate. Where he did not plunder he observed and gathered information. He mapped out the whole of the South American coast, discovered the military strength, shipping, fortifications and armaments, and where he made geographical discoveries he called the places after his Queen and country. It is easy to believe that when he founded New Albion, he consciously wanted to checkmate the Spanish schemes for expansion. He was an instinctive pioneer, the first of a long line of English colonial heroes. His Queen understood him. His visit to Ternate and the concluded alliance with the Sultan was considered by her to be one of the most important results of the whole voyage, the first sign of British power in the Far East. She presented him with an artistic beaker as a reward for his services, and had his reception by the Sultan skilfully portrayed on it.

From Ternate the voyage continued through the then completely unknown seas of the Malay Archipelago, and here in the eleventh hour the whole enterprise was almost wrecked.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening. They had just sailed west from the Celebes through the dangerous Greyhound Straits and they rejoiced when they saw the Banda Sea before them. Suddenly the *Golden Hind*, which was sailing full sail before a good wind, ran aground with a mighty crash. She had struck a coral reef.

With lightning speed they hauled in the sails. Some of the men immediately set to work on the pumps. The ship's carpenters looked for the leak. Fortunately, the damage was not great. The ship was soon free of water and the leakage caulked.

The situation, however, was desperate. The vessel stuck fast and each wave might smash her against the rocks.

Drake ordered a warp anchor to be cast, but the boat sought in vain for anchorage. The sea on the other side of the reef was bottomless.

An anxious night followed. It was fortunate that most of the men were unaware of the danger and thought they would be able to free themselves with the rising tide. Drake did all he could to hide the situation from them and kept them in a good mood with jokes. Those who knew, however, despaired and sought refuge in prayer.

Next morning they rowed off again to seek anchorage. In vain. It was then clear to every one that there was hardly a hope left. The only salvation seemed to be to abandon the ship, but the boat held only ten men and they were fifty-eight. Also, the nearest land was at least six nautical miles away and who wanted to leave the dearly bought treasure at this point as an easy prey for the sea ?

They all determined to hold out until the end and to wait and see if the gods would send them help. Drake ordered Fletcher to hold divine service and every man took communion.

They felt strengthened by this. Fresh hope came to them. They lightened the freight. Eight heavy guns and sacks of flour and beans flew overboard. But the ship did not stir. She drew thirteen feet of water, but to larboard on the reef she lay in only six feet of water, while starboard there was a bottomless deep so that she might capsize at any minute. This had been prevented up till then by a stiff breeze to starboard.

Towards four o'clock in the afternoon the wind subsided and then the dangerous moment came. The ship tilted and in a few seconds all would have been over, but as if by a miracle the keel freed itself. Drake ordered a light sail to be set and the *Hind* slowly glided off into deep water.

This torture had lasted for twenty hours, but the joy which now broke out was indescribable.

There was only one man who regretted it and that was the chaplain, Fletcher. He seems to have openly shown his fear in the hour of distress, and he may have even hinted that he saw in the shipwreck a punishment for Doughty's execution. Whatever it was, as soon as the ship was afloat Drake ordered him to be chained to the hatchway leading to the crew's quarters. He then appeared himself and held a mock trial over the unfortunate servant of the Church during which he sat down on a chest, crossed his legs, and, holding two slippers in his hands, solemnly condemned him thus :

'Francis Fletcher, I hereby excommunicate you from God's Holy Church and from His Mercy, and I hand you over to the devil and all his host. And I forbid you, under penalty of death, ever to appear again before the mast. If, in spite of what I say you do this, I shall have you hanged.'

The *Golden Hind* had escaped a terrible danger, but on her further journey she was beset with a thousand others. For a whole month they were tossed about in the dangerous waters of the Banda Sea and the Flores Sea and it is not clear on to which course they came in the end. They sighted Java on the 9th of March, where they landed in the harbour of a Rajah, who in giving hospitality was in no way inferior to the Sultan of Ternate. Drake added a cargo of costly spices to his booty. He was only chased out of such a good refuge by news that various Portuguese men-of-war were making the coast unsafe.

They continued, without any further misfortunes, across the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope, round which they sailed, keeping close to land, and from there homeward along a familiar route.

After a voyage of almost three years the *Golden Hind* ran into Plymouth Harbour at the end of September 1579.

The whole of England rang with the story of Drake's deeds. The Spanish Ambassador raged and demanded his head. But the Queen held a protecting hand over him.

The true value of his booty was never divulged, for before the treasure was handed over to the Government the Queen allowed Drake, his crew, and his financiers to take their proper shares. The rest, which was still worth thousands of pounds, found its way to the Tower as confiscated Spanish goods where it was kept at Philip's disposal in case he ever wanted to pay for damages done to English merchant vessels.

Drake became the recognized favourite of the Queen, who for a time had him daily with her and listened to his adventures. She openly wore his presents, a valuable cross of diamonds and a diadem of emeralds.

The *Golden Hind* was publicly exhibited at Deptford near London. And Elizabeth came with her whole suite to view the gaily decorated ship. As she was received on board by Drake, a golden sword was handed to her and she ordered him to kneel.

' Drake,' she said, ' the King of Spain demands your head. I have come to strike it off!'

Then she passed the sword to a nobleman of her retinue and ordered him to dub the pirate a knight. A magnificent banquet was prepared on deck, and it was so sumptuous that nothing like it had been seen since the days of Henry VIII. The crowd surged forward on the shore, shouting and cheering. The bridge which led from the ship to the land bent under the enormous crowd of inquisitive onlookers and suddenly collapsed during the banquet. The people fell into the water amidst great merriment, but no one was drowned.

Later on, the wonder ship was brought ashore, and for years she lay under an awning as an object of interest. The students of Westminster covered the masts with poetic inscriptions, and every one who visited London was eager to set foot on the planks which could speak of such romantic adventures. When it was quite dilapidated it was broken up and an arm-chair was made out of its last fragments and presented to the University of Oxford in memory of the great voyage.

Sir Francis Drake, ' the master thief of the *terra incognita* ', as his enemies called him, was now at the height of his career. He had become a great gentleman, who could compete with the Queen's most brilliant courtiers. He bought a wonderful country seat in England and married a member of the nobility. The daring privateer became one of England's greatest admirals. No one asked about Doughty, whose brother twice attempted to bring an action against Drake, but it did not come to anything and only ended with the arrest of the complainant. Drake's piracy became a national achievement, for England was on the verge of war with Spain and it was well known that Philip was preparing for a great attack. The war party, therefore, did all in its power to bring this about and once again let Drake loose on Spain. Drake directed his attack on the coast of the peninsula ' to singe Philip's beard ', as he used to say. From there he sailed once more to the West Indies with thirty ships and over two thousand soldiers with whom he sacked San Domingo and Cartagena. And when the great moment came, when the Invincible Armada steered into the English Channel and England was faced with annihilation, it was Drake as Vice-Admiral who advanced to a decisive attack at the right moment. The most powerful and brilliant fleet which the world had ever known was completely destroyed and Spain had to surrender Neptune's trident to England for ever and aye.

But great as his deeds and power were, nothing equals the romantic adventures of his youth. Drake, the adventurer who lay in wait with eighteen men for the caravan of gold before Panama, is an infinitely more sympathetic figure than the Admiral who set out to conquer Lisbon with thousands of soldiers. Earlier in life he had been a thief, but we rarely hear that he bought his plunder with men's lives and threw firebrands into people's houses. Later, his personal gain may have been small, but wherever he went he left a trail of smoking ruins behind him.

He undertook his last voyage with his cousin Hawkins, again to the West Indies, the scene of his youthful adventures. The enterprise was under an unlucky star from the beginning. Their goal was Panama, but the Spaniards had been warned and were well prepared. Everything miscarried. Hawkins died before they reached Porto Rico, a place which they failed to conquer. Drake reduced Rio de la Hache, Santa Martha, and Nombre de Dios to ashes. These were his old hunting-grounds, but he did not gain a single peso there. From Nombre de Dios he sent one of his companions, Baskerville, with 750 men towards Panama. After a few days Baskerville returned without having achieved his object. They had marched in ceaseless rain, their provisions and ammunition were drenched through and his men were exhausted. Moreover, Spanish forts lay all along the route now, the first of which proved to be impregnable. The maroons did not bring help, and the Indians who held with the Spaniards broke the bridges behind the assailants and caused them great losses. Completely beaten, the troop returned to the ship. Drake was in terrible straits.

'Since our return,' says one man, who took part in the expedition, 'all signs of cheerfulness have left his face.'

He wanted now to go to Porto Bello where the market of Nombre de Dios had moved and where the Panama transports put in. But adverse winds compelled him to seek shelter at a small island to wait for better weather.

Their stay there lasted for weeks, and many of them suffered from dysentery. The crew, officers, and doctors died in large numbers.

Drake thought of the days of his youth.

'What a rich garden the West Indies were,' he sighed, 'and what a deserted and desolate waste it has become!'

But he still looked ahead and consoled his disheartened men:

'I know there are still many ways whereby we may serve Her Majesty and win riches. For we must have gold before we return to England.'

But a few days later the pestilence attacked him. He lay down in his cabin and he never came out of it again. He died on the way to Porto Bello.

There, in the harbour where the wealth of America was brought to be shipped further to Spain, Drake was buried. To the roar of cannon from the whole fleet, under the flourish of trumpets and the roll of drums, his body was lowered from his flagship into the sea whose great and adventurous son he had been.

The drum which sounded England's last farewell to him is preserved to this day at Buckland Abbey, his family seat, and it is said that when England is in distress and the drum is beaten, then the old freebooter will rise up from the waves and lead her to victory.

CHAPTER V

CLIFFORD

QUEEN ELIZABETH was surrounded by a court of brilliant cavaliers, amongst whom were Leicester, the privileged favourite of the Queen, Sir Philip Sidney, the 'Flower of Chivalry' and pastoral poet, Francis Bacon, the astute politician and first modern philosopher, Sir Walter Raleigh, statesman, soldier, world explorer and historian, the young Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's friend and patron, and the Earl of Essex, full of ambition and restless but vain and fickle, who ended his passionate life on the scaffold by order of the Queen who loved him.

Amongst all these men, however, there was none who did more honour to his Norman ancestors than George Clifford, the third Earl of Cumberland. His father died young, so that as a boy of twelve Clifford inherited the title and estates. He spent his youth at that venerable place Battle Abbey, and at nineteen he married the daughter of his guardian, the Duke of Bedford, who as chance would have it was also Francis Drake's godfather.

The Queen could not wish for a more active cavalier. He was tall and strong, versatile, handsome and rich, and shone at all the tournaments and pageants. He was very extravagant, wore the most expensive garments, and was passionately devoted to horses and dice. In the game of love he never allowed himself to be fettered by marriage ties. The Queen had once given him a glove set with precious jewels, which he had picked up from the ground for her, and all his life he wore it on a fantastic hat. She entrusted him repeatedly with important missions. He took part in the trial of Mary Stuart and was present at her execution. He fought against the Spanish Armada and was the first to bring news of the victory to Elizabeth. His paternal inheritance was considerable, but his debts were greater. The ducats ran through his fingers and, like many another gallant, he was soon at the end of his resources, and like Leicester, Raleigh, and Essex he looked with hopeful eyes towards the sea, where on account of the war Spanish gold was legitimate booty. Still, he was not, like the others, content merely to invest a certain amount of capital. He arranged enterprises of his own and equipped no fewer than twelve privateering expeditions and, for the most part, led them himself. The Queen always gave him ready and willing help, she chartered her ships to him and, of course, took care that she did not go short when the booty was being divided.

The first two voyages did not produce the booty he had expected, so he changed his hunting-ground on the third voyage for the Azores where the Portuguese carracks used to put in for water and victuals. They were a kind of Portuguese fleet, which carried all the year round from Goa to Lisbon the wealth of the East Indies : sacks of gold dust and gems, ivory, and costly spices. They were the largest ships of the time, anything from a thousand to two thousand tons, well furnished with guns and men and worthy opponents for our doughty Clifford. He was soon after them. On making a series of other prizes with more or less luck he intended to surprise them at Angra in the neighbourhood of Terceira. But he learnt there that they had left the port several days previously and could not be overtaken. Clifford's squadron was at that time very short of water, and as the chief object of the voyage had not been realized, the crew wanted to return home and were in such a hurry that he was not able to take full advantage of their last opportunity for taking in water. Close to the Spanish coast they succeeded in capturing a ship of the West Indian fleet, which had a cargo worth some £100,000 on her. The carracks could not have yielded more. As Cumberland's flagship, the *Victory*, was superior in speed to the other vessels he sailed ahead and left the rest of the squadron together with the prize to follow under Captain Lister.

On his way to England there was a terrible storm at sea, and to add to this his men were suffering from thirst. At last when the storm subsided the *Victory* put in to port in Ireland.

But bad luck was to follow Clifford. As he continued the journey, and on coming close to the English coast, he received news that the valuable prize for which the voyage had been taken had been wrecked on the Cornish coast. However, the voyage was not entirely without profit. Clifford had made no fewer than thirteen prizes, which meant that the money invested was doubled, although the ship which had gone down was worth more than all of them put together. A year later he was encouraged to venture on a new enterprise, which, however, only took him to the Portuguese coast and did not bring in anything very important.

The following year there seemed to be nothing better for him to do than to pursue his voyages. This time he wanted to sail with a squadron of five ships towards the West Indies, but adverse winds delayed him so long in the English harbours that the victuals would not have been sufficient for so long a voyage. Clifford then abandoned the idea of going on the voyage himself and returned to London after handing over the ship to Captain Norton. But he first gave orders that they should pounce on the carracks near the Azores.

Near to the islands Captain Norton met with a squadron which Sir Walter Raleigh had equipped, and after several days they joined one of the Queen's men-of-war, the *Foresight*, under Captain Robert Crosse. They had heard that the carracks were expected any day near the Azores, and they therefore joined forces since 'God and fate had brought them together at the right moment'. The strength of their fleet was sufficiently great and they made good use of it. To prevent the prey from escaping they placed their ships due west of the Island of Flores in a wide north-south line so that they always kept in sight of each other on a front of not less than two degrees of latitude. And then they waited.

Three days later Captain Thomson of the *Dainty* in Raleigh's squadron, who lay farthest to windward, sighted an enormous carrack. It was the 1600-ton *Madre de Dios*, one of the largest ships belonging to Portugal. Without waiting for the other vessels of his squadron and eager for plunder, he set off at once to capture her. His gunner wanted to discharge two cannons, but Thomson maintained order and tradition. First of all, he had a cask of wine rolled up and drank with his men to their future success. Then they began the fight.

Within range of the guns the *Madre de Dios* was ordered to strike sails.

They took no notice. Then the impatient gunner had his way and discharged two cannon-shots across her so well that the boards were shattered. A broadside followed. Then the *Dainty* shot forward alongside the carrack and attempted to board her, but had a nasty reception. No fewer than 800 men defended the enormous ship and forced back the assailants. Enraged, they repeated the attack and tore the Portuguese flag down off the stern, but things went badly on board. And again a third time. They paid for their excessive zeal with many dead and wounded. Their foremast was shot in two, so that they were hindered in their manœuvres and slowly withdrew from their efficient opponents.

At four o'clock in the afternoon Sir John Burgh, leader of the Raleigh squadron, came up with the *Roebuck* and soon after Captain Crosse came up with the *Foresight*. They both agreed that if the booty were not to slip through their fingers they would need to act quickly. They decided to fire on her simultaneously from both sides and then to board her. But either through mismanagement or bad luck they simply boarded each other instead of the carrack and the *Roebuck* received such a shot under the water-line that she sprang a leak and almost sank. She was put completely out of action. Meanwhile, Captain Crosse followed the *Madre de Dios* which was endeavouring to reach the coast of the Island of Flores. She could not hold out much longer, but at least the crew might set fire to their ship and save themselves. That had to be avoided at all costs. Crosse wanted to cut across her course and delay her by firing until the other ships of the squadron came to his help.

He succeeded in crossing the bow of the carrack. He let the guns play on her, but she was quite a match for him. For three hours they faced each other, these two sea dragons, the colossus and the little English ship. Crosse swore he would rather set the Portuguese on fire than leave her cargo, but instead of this his own ship was twice set on fire and nearly burnt out. As for the carrack, the whole of her rigging was shot down and they could scarcely move. But it was useless to think of boarding her, because of her superior man-power.

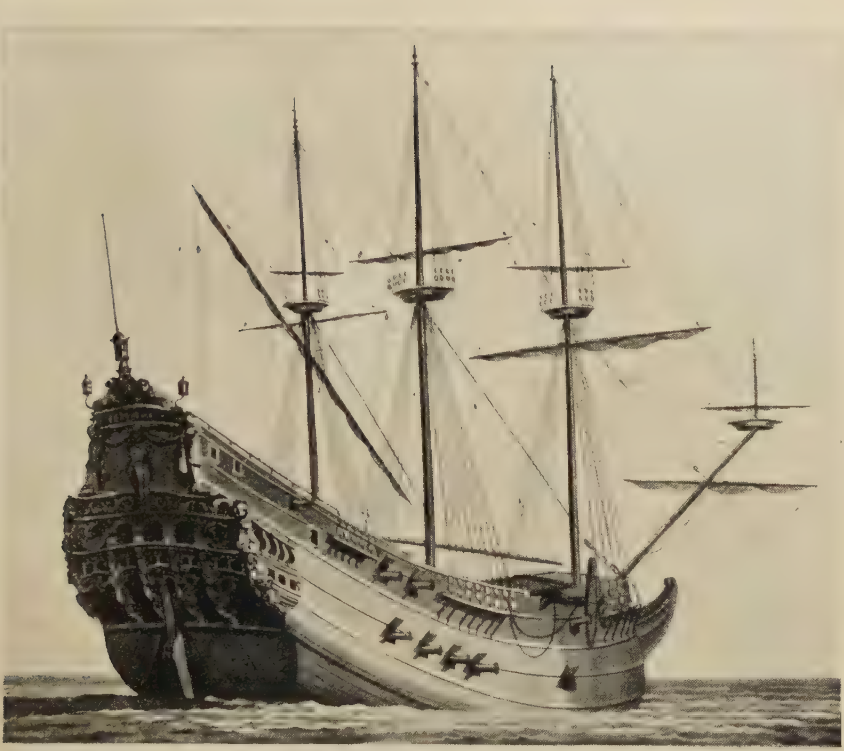
Meantime, night fell. At last towards midnight two of Clifford's ships under Captain Norton arrived on the scene. And now shots flashed out like lightning from all sides on to the giantess. It was not long before they boarded her without any difficulty. The assailants yelled wildly as they poured on to her deck from all sides.

The decks swam in blood and were so covered with bodies and wounded men that it was almost impossible to move about. The helm of this massive ship was so enormous that it took no less than twelve men to work it. Three or four men had been killed by each shot from the English guns and others had had to take their places so as to keep the vessel in her course. Men groaned and called out for water, but the victors cared little about that. Discipline vanished. The Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Burgh, was not at his post, but was endeavouring to keep his leaking ship afloat and had apparently not given any orders as to how the crew was to be controlled once they had boarded the other vessel. The officers present, Sir Robert Crosse and two of Clifford's captains, took the lead and did not set a very good example. Instead of a respectable body of men, a rabble of thieves stormed over the ship and vied with each other in robbing and stealing. They broke chests open, smashed cupboards, ransacked their contents and searched for gold, pearls and gems. If anything did not please them they threw it overboard. As it grew dark, they lit candles in the cabins and holds and were so careless that fires broke out in several places. The carrack might have gone up in the air had it not been for Captain Norton and a few courageous fellows, who put the flames out.

The next morning Sir John Burgh immediately declared that the whole prize was the property of the Queen and he ordered the plunderers to deliver up the stolen goods. Clifford's men refused to obey. They had taken the ship and the booty belonged to them. Burgh wisely refrained from taking the matter further. He instituted order, let the marauders return to their ships and then handed the carrack over to trustworthy men. Above all, he attended to the wounded, sent his doctors to them and set the prisoners free to sail back to Lisbon in a small English barque and he provided them with enough victuals and money.

Then they all set out on their homeward voyage.

On the way things happened which were to be expected with such an undisciplined company. One ship after another sailed away from the squadron and stole off alone for England, so that they might quickly dispose of their plunder before the Queen intervened. In the end Sir John Burgh was left alone with the *Roebuck* and the carrack to put in to Dartmouth. He immediately reported matters to the Government, and Elizabeth sent several commissioners out to the coasts to recover the booty from the robbers. But they were too late. The customs' officers, overseers, and bailiffs did not know where to begin their search, for there was nothing to be got out of the Jack Tars but bullets and knife thrusts. Nor could they extract anything from the officers. These gentlemen were subjected to a strict inquiry and it turned out that the supercargo of the *Madre de Dios* who was the only one who could give accurate information about the cargo had, contrary to all practice, been released together with the other prisoners and not so much as a bill of lading could be found. The officers were quite well able to remember details of their own heroic deeds, but they only had vague ideas about the place where the booty was hidden. As they were questioned more closely they began to blame each other. Sir John Burgh was supposed to have received hush-money from various sources



A GENOESE CARRACK OF 1542
From an Engraving by Tomkins

and Captain Crosse £10,000, of which he returned £2,000 after lengthy arguments. A wonderful cross of diamonds and emeralds was found in his house. Some of the crew suffered the same kind of misfortune when they were cross-examined. It was always some one else, or a stranger, who had stolen the jewels. The authorities gradually realized that there was nothing more to be gained. At least nine-tenths of the valuable booty had been pocketed. A terrible blow for such men as Clifford and Raleigh! But the Queen was more enraged than any of them. She gave orders that all goods brought inland from the coasts were to be searched. When she realized that this was no use she claimed the remainder of the booty for herself. The carrack was still full of aromatics, spices, silk and cotton goods, carpets, ivory, ebony, porcelain and various objects of art, which together represented some £600,000. Raleigh and Clifford would therefore get nothing. It was not to be wondered at in Raleigh's case, for he was not in favour with the Virgin Queen for having married one of her court ladies. Clifford was not to receive anything because he could not prove that his men had cast in their lot with Burgh, but on the contrary had shown by their insubordination that they did not feel bound by any contract. But her counsellors dissuaded her from this opinion, since all other enterprises would be discouraged by it. In the end a division was made, which included all the participators.

The *Madre de Dios* became the marvel of the port of Dartmouth. She was a huge vessel for those days, over 165 feet long and 46 feet wide. Later on, when the town built an almshouse, she was broken up and her wood used in the building.

Clifford was in the Queen's favour during these events. She had made him a Knight of the Order of the Garter and on the occasion of a visit to Oxford he was presented with a Master's degree, for he was a great mathematician. But these honours did not delude the man, who had received less than any one else when the booty was being divided up. He felt it would have been better had he taken part in the voyage himself. He therefore wanted to repair the damage and launched a fresh privateering expedition, which again sailed to the Spanish coast and then on to the Azores. This voyage was the most successful he had ever equipped, although it did not have many adventures. A few French, Spanish, and Portuguese vessels were captured and these were carrying such rich cargoes that the Queen and her financiers together were able to put over seven million ducats into their pockets.

A year later he sent out three ships to his hunting-ground: the *Royal Exchange*, the *Mayflower*, and the *Sampson*.

They sighted a carrack close to Saint Michael. It was no smaller than the *Madre de Dios* and therefore promised a similar booty. It was the *Cinque Llagas*. According to Portuguese custom she was thoroughly overloaded, so that she lay deep in the water and had few sails.

At first the *Mayflower* came up with her, and at once began the fight in which, towards evening, the *Sampson* joined. The flagship appeared during the night and then the three of them decided to wait until morning before boarding her.

The following morning three cannon-shots gave the signal for the attack. The *Royal Exchange* attacked from the front, the *Mayflower* attacked the centre and the *Sampson* was at the stern. But their manœuvres miscarried. The ships ran against each other, whereby the *Mayflower* was so damaged that she could no longer be counted on for battle at close quarters and she drifted slowly away. The other two vessels now lay in a different position from what they had intended, which so upset their calculations that they were thrown into confusion. This helped the Portuguese to be better prepared. They had turned their deck into a fortress by barricading it with chests and sacks. They were thus under complete cover and met the assailants with well-aimed fire from guns and muskets. William Anthony, the captain of the *Mayflower*, was one of the first to fall, Captain Cave of the flagship had both his legs shattered, and Captain Downton of the *Sampson* was severely wounded by a shot in the stomach. A great number of men lay about dead or bleeding from wounds. It seemed for an instant as if the attack was without a leader. The crew ran about in wild confusion hiding themselves from the firing. Captain Grant of the *Sampson* saved the situation and tried to board the carrack with his men, but he was driven back. The second attack in which they all took part went better, so well that they were able to hoist their flag on the stern of the enemy ship, but even so they were repulsed. The flag was thrown out after them.

The Portuguese fought desperately.

Further attacks of the Englishmen failed because of the Portuguese fire. The height of the Portuguese ship was an advantage which made itself felt. They had no difficulty in pushing the clambering men back ; they threw stones and all kinds of heavy objects after them. In the end they hurled burning slow-matches, sacks and logs on to the deck of the English vessel and into the rigging, so that in self-defence the assailants took flight and were glad to be free of the carrack.

In retaliation they now fired their guns at them. A mat on the bowsprit of the *Cinque Llagas* caught fire, which soon spread to the ropes and foremast sail and over all the rigging. The whole ship was in flames.

Terrible scenes ensued on the carrack. It seemed at first as if she would surrender. A white flag appeared on deck, but disappeared again. Excited orders were given, there were fearful cries of horror, and shouts for help rang over the water. A Franciscan monk with crucifix in hand was seen addressing the people. Some knelt before him and crossed themselves, others wrung their hands in desperate prayer. Chests, beams and other wooden objects were thrown overboard and hundreds of people jumped into the water to cling on to them.

This was their only escape from the flames, but not from the waves. They floundered round the ship and after a short struggle most of them were drowned. Some managed to swim over to the Englishmen, who put boats out to rescue them. Amongst these were Captain Nuno Velio Pereira and another officer, Bras Carrero, whose ship had been wrecked off Mozambique. But these were only a few, and over five hundred were drowned. According to Portuguese records there were more than a thousand.

During the next day and the following night the carrack was burning and on the third day the fire reached her powder magazine. With a deafening noise the unlucky ship went up in the air and its wreckage and immense treasures were swallowed by the greedy sea.

They had set out for booty, but everything now had been uselessly burnt. They cruised about the Azores for another month and almost captured another carrack. Then they returned to England with Nuno Veilo and Bras Carrero as prisoners. They were entertained as guests in Clifford's house until they ransomed themselves free with 3,000 crusados. This was the only money the voyage produced.

Clifford learnt his lesson by this last voyage. He believed that its failure was caused by the small size of the English vessels. He therefore had a ship built for himself, the *Malice Scourge*, of 800 tons, the largest ship an English private owner had ever possessed. He felt he could count on better success with her and tried the vessel out on two short successive trips before setting out in 1597 for his last and greatest voyage.

He had gathered a brilliant squadron consisting of eighteen ships in all, well armed, well manned, and well stocked with victuals. If the matter went well he and his men could count on sharing an enormous spoil. This time they were out for the carracks which were setting out from Lisbon for the East Indies and which were no less richly laden than on their return journey from Goa. But the Portuguese had been warned about them, and Philip II forbade any such voyages for a year. When Clifford was told this he was less hopeful. He now sailed towards the Canary Isles to try to plunder a town or island. He captured Lanzerota, but without getting much booty, for the inhabitants had removed everything except for a number of papal bulls and letters of indulgence and a quantity of excellent wines. Clifford was not able to touch a drop of the wine, for he lay ill and weak with fever.

The question now was, what should they do next, since the original purpose of their voyage had been frustrated ? Some of the captains proposed a journey to Brazil to attack and plunder the coast unexpectedly, but the pilots were against it. The weather would be too bad at that time of year. Then Clifford came forward with a plan. He wanted to go to the West Indies. There were a number of rich markets waiting for them over there. And if nothing succeeded there were always the galleons and the flota with their valuable cargoes.

They all agreed and then sailed westward.

The attack was to be aimed at Porto Rico, which Clifford wanted to establish as a base for further and greater expeditions on the mainland. The plan was very ambitious. It meant a systematic attack on the Spanish colonies. Drake's main purpose out here was to plunder and take booty, but now, for the first time, there was a politician at work, who tried after the fashion of Essex and Raleigh to bring about the expansion of English power. The victory over the Armada was beginning to bear fruit.

San Juan, the capital of Porto Rico, lies on the north coast of the island on a long sand-bank, which stretches out like a bar from east to west before a wide bay.

The town was one of the best fortified in the whole of the West Indies. Clifford did not want to repeat Drake's attempt to attack her from the sea, but he intended to land east of the town and to take her from the land side without having any idea of the eastern passage, which separated the town from the main island.

Before reaching the island and a few miles east of the passage he let his ships cast anchor and laid his scheme before the captains. They did not approve of it. The route was not sufficiently well known to some of them and the others either feared the long march or were nervous of leaving their ships.

The Earl made short work of all this. He got into a boat and was rowed ashore. And as he unfurled his colours there, they all followed—a thousand soldiers, sailors, officers and volunteers.

It was still early in the morning when the troops drew themselves up into regular order of two regiments each consisting of six companies. One regiment was headed by the Earl and the other by Sir John Berkeley.

They set out with the Earl's regiment leading. The route lay along the sea-coast, and the town, San Juan, which was on rather high ground, was always in front of them. But they had miscalculated the distance. It was not as near as it seemed. For hours they marched and the sun rose higher and beat down with tropical heat on to the men, who were gasping under the weight of arms, equipment and ammunition. They gradually broke marching order, most of them took off their boots and waded barefoot through the water.

Suddenly the men at the head noticed two Spanish riders, who had rapidly disappeared again. It was quite clear that they were being watched and could no longer take the town by surprise. After a short time a negro ran towards them and readily offered to lead the way, but he understood neither English nor Spanish. However, he led them up hill and down dale until suddenly they stood opposite the entrance to Fort Matadiavolo, whose guns faced them menacingly.

Then they were at their wits' end. The fort would not have been an obstacle against their considerable force. It also seemed to be weakly garrisoned, but how were they to get across ? The exhausted men lay down on the stones and rested, and the officers were not very favourably disposed, for they found that their warnings had been justified.

But the Earl did not lose heart and agreed to the negro's suggestion to lead them to a bridge. The march was resumed and they now went southwards to the passage where they would have to cross over to Fort San Antonio.

It was a dreadful route ! At last they came out to the coast again and they eagerly looked for the bridge of which the negro had spoken. But far and wide there was nothing to be seen.

The Earl ordered the head of the line to halt so as to collect the exhausted men. The sun set. It was high time they found a resting-place or a battle would be impossible on the next day. Suddenly, there was a shout from the rear. Two stragglers had seen some horses grazing inland. The news was greeted with yells of delight. Some of the men who were not too footsore set off and caught the animals. They were wretched nags, half starved and run wild, but they carried in turn the footsore and the weary men and made it possible for the march to continue.

Night had fallen by the time they reached the water. There they saw something over the water, which might be a bridge. Clifford ordered a halt. He set out to reconnoitre for himself and saw a narrow dam leading over the water to a bridge, which connected it with the opposite bank. The bridge was drawn up and the path behind was heavily barricaded. Some Spaniards stood on the bank and were watching the strangers.

The reconnoitre was not very promising. The dam was so narrow that at the most only three men could stand side by side on it. It would only be possible for a larger number to cross over if the water on either side of the dam were sufficiently shallow for them to wade through it. This was only possible when the tide was low. So there was nothing else to be done, but to wait for the turn of the tide.

The Earl cautiously returned to his troops. He placed a watch on the bank, who was to report to him as soon as the tide turned and then he lay down to sleep.

About two hours before sunrise the watch reported the turn of the tide. A quiet alarm was given and the men woke up feeling rested. As the companies drew up in regular order the officers armed themselves. A dispute arose between Clifford and Berkeley as to whose regiment should begin the attack. Both wanted to be the first. In the end Clifford decided that as his regiment had been leading on the previous day Berkeley's should now attack, but he wanted personally to be with the attacking party.

They marched silently to the dam, which was still bathed in moonlight, but they were not quiet enough, for the men on the other side were on their guard. Scarcely had they set foot on the dam than the firing began and shots swept over them into the water and on to the stones. Six different cannons flashed out on to them and forced them off the dam. They now tried to wade on either side and came a good way forward, but the ground was so rough that they could only grope forward with great difficulty. Suddenly, Clifford's shield-bearer stumbled and pulled his master down with him into the water. The adjutant sprang at once to Clifford's assistance and only after a number of attempts he managed to drag the exhausted man out of the water. After he had somewhat recovered they carried him back on to the bank, where he lay half unconscious.

Meanwhile, Berkeley had at least come within firing range of the muskets. The assailants now fired on them and did not spare their ammunition. Nor did the Spaniards. A cannon royal at the gateway of the fort discharged well-aimed shots and so controlled the dam that no one could walk along it. For all that, the Englishmen at last reached the other bank and now stood immediately below the fortress wall where the guns could no longer harm them. They scrambled out of the water and beat the closed door with pikes and halberds, but the door did not yield. They had no tools to ram it. Sir John Berkeley tried to attack the fortification from the other side, but the water was too deep and he was nearly drowned in the attempt.

The Earl's regiment watched from the other bank and he too saw that the attack was in vain. He now gave orders to his own men and in dense herds they swarmed on to the dam.

But they too did not accomplish anything. There were not enough weapons. The fort was too strong.

Meanwhile, the tide turned, the current became stronger, and they had hardly realized this when the water rose over their knees and was soon up to their waists. It was dawn. It was a critical moment. If they delayed any longer they would only be able to return by the dam.

Berkeley saw there was nothing to be done, so he gave orders to retreat.

Bruised and beaten, disheartened, swearing and groaning, they reached the bank. Fifty of them were either killed or wounded, and amongst them two officers. The doctors bound up their wounds, and then began the return march to the coast, where the boats took the disillusioned men back on board their ships.

This failure did not discourage the Earl. He had certainly suffered most and now lay exhausted and feverish in his cabin, but all night he turned over in his mind plans of how he could get at the Spaniards. The next morning he was again on deck fully armed and began fresh preparations. One of the smaller vessels was to draw up as close as possible to the Fort Matadiavolo and was to take it under heavy gunfire. From the other side of the entrance fifty musketeers were to land and support the attack from there. Meanwhile, a body of 200 musketeers and pikemen were to land on the coast between the town and fortress and seize the fortification from the rear. If it were taken they would be on the island and then they could easily attack from both sides the other fort from which they had been repulsed the previous day, and after capturing it they could march on to San Juan.

It was a good plan and it was well executed. The small ship ran straight on to the sand and remained there for ever, but she discharged shot after shot from there on to the fort. The musketeers held the Spaniards on the other side and soon there were no more to be seen at the gun barrels. As the defenders saw the two hundred men land they evacuated the fortification as rapidly as possible and withdrew to the town so as not to be cut off.

Meanwhile, the Earl had landed with the main force and marched along the old route to the fort of San Antonio and waited here until the troops, who had taken Matadiavolo, had joined him.

It was a bright moonlight night, and not a sound came across from San Antonio. It looked as if the fort had been evacuated. Clifford and Berkeley crept forward cautiously to reconnoitre and confirmed that the fortification had been abandoned.

The way to the town was now free. In a short time the troops were assembled together, and in the middle of the night they marched on San Juan. The roads were rough and so narrow that only three men could march side by side.

As dawn broke they stood before the town. It lay lifeless and quiet. Apart from a few old people, women and invalids, the whole of the inhabitants, the Governor and garrison had taken refuge in the strongest fort, Castillo de Moro.

The sinister and grey walls of the fort stared out at them. It was completely surrounded by water and it was protected by a deep moat. The drawbridge was up.

Without any delay the Earl gave orders for the drums to be beaten, and, with a flag of truce, proceeded to the gate to inform the Governor that he came by order of the Queen of England and summoned him to surrender the fort. The Spaniard replied in the same terms that he stood there by order of the King of Spain to hold the fort and this he would do to the last breath.

There was nothing left but to lay siege to the fort. The Englishmen took up quarters in the town and their ships were brought up and blockaded the harbour. Two batteries were brought into position. The bombardment began on the Monday and continued throughout the day with such success that on the following day the fortress showed the white flag. Clifford sent his conditions written in English which no one in the fort could translate. They therefore asked that they should be presented in Spanish, which the Englishman flatly refused to do, so there was nothing left for the Spaniards but to surrender unconditionally. They had nothing to complain of, for the Earl, like Drake, was a chivalrous man. He left them their arms and their flags, and after the custom of the time politely invited the Governor to join him at dinner.

He intended to be less lenient with the wealth of the city, but he had a great disappointment. The golden days of the Conquista were over. The mines no longer yielded gold. The inhabitants were poor. All they found here was sugar, ginger and hides. The town and country were thoroughly searched. No doubt many of the inhabitants had hidden their valuables, but nothing came to light. The Earl ceased being a plunderer and became a politician. He wanted to perpetuate the occupation of Porto Rico. It hung like a key on the door of the Spanish Treasury from which Philip fed his army and navy. And this key was to pass into English hands. Porto Rico was to be the first colony of the English Crown and at the same time the starting-point for further great conquests in the New World.

But the bold fellow had reckoned without his host.

The rainy season set in and with it fevers.

In a short time three hundred of them died. The Earl saw that he had been cheated out of one of his greatest wishes. He rapidly treated with the Spaniards for ransom, but they showed him the cold shoulder and delayed the negotiations. The ransom was refused and Clifford was left with only sugar to load his ships.

One day four hundred dead were reported to him. Four hundred out of the thousand healthy men who had landed!

Then he speedily evacuated the places he had conquered, to return to the Azores to chase galleons. He left his comrade, Berkeley, lying ill with fever in his cabin. On the high seas, however, he was caught in such a storm that he was a month late in reaching the Islands.

And not a Spanish ship was sighted. He sailed home. At last he landed in England with little glory and still less booty.

This was Clifford's last voyage.

He lived to see the death of his Queen and appeared at the solemn entry of King James with such a magnificent suite that the crowd thought he was the king and wildly cheered him.

He died at the age of forty-eight, having squandered most of his rich possessions, and was buried in the family vault at Skipton.

In the year 1893 the antiquary, Mr. Whitaker, was granted permission to open the coffin to view the noble lord. As Clifford had been embalmed, Mr. Whitaker found he was ‘ quite perfect ’, and made the important discovery that he had three warts on his left cheek, which had always been politely omitted in his portraits.

CHAPTER VI

THE BUCCANEERS

THE Earl of Cumberland's Porto Rico voyage was the last of the great pirate expeditions that were so numerous in the time of Queen Elizabeth.

Clifford's invasion of Porto Rico had shown what the Antilles were like at that time. The old riches had vanished, the islands were depopulated and defenceless against any strong attacks. At the most they were now calling ports for the silver ships. The centre and the north of the island were completely uninhabited. Instead, animals abounded; horses, oxen, pigs and dogs ran wild, and it was not long before hunters came there.

No one knows who these hunters were or where they came from. Perhaps they were shipwrecked or marooned sailors or runaways. In any case they were wild fellows: Dutch, English, and chiefly French, who settled at the beginning of the seventeenth century on the north coast of Hayti. In divine unconstraint they had regained the freedom of paradise. They were a world on their own. Their nationality and their names had been left behind in Europe, for here they were called 'Coast Brothers' and lived in groups of two to five members in huts made of logs, brushwood and hides. They had neither wife nor child and no other possessions than good weapons and a few household utensils, and even these were common property. What one wanted he could take from the other. Yet they were not without laws: their highest unwritten law was comradeship. Neither huts nor chests were to be locked. If one died the others inherited the little he had. They settled their quarrels by duels.

Their purpose in life was to hunt wild cattle and boars, which they chased with a pack of wild hounds they tamed and trained. The animals they stalked were killed, skinned, quartered and smoked according to methods learnt from the Caribbeans. The Indians called this smoked meat 'Bucan' and the Europeans, therefore, called this process 'buccaneering'. This word then extended to the hunters and they were called 'Buccaneers'.

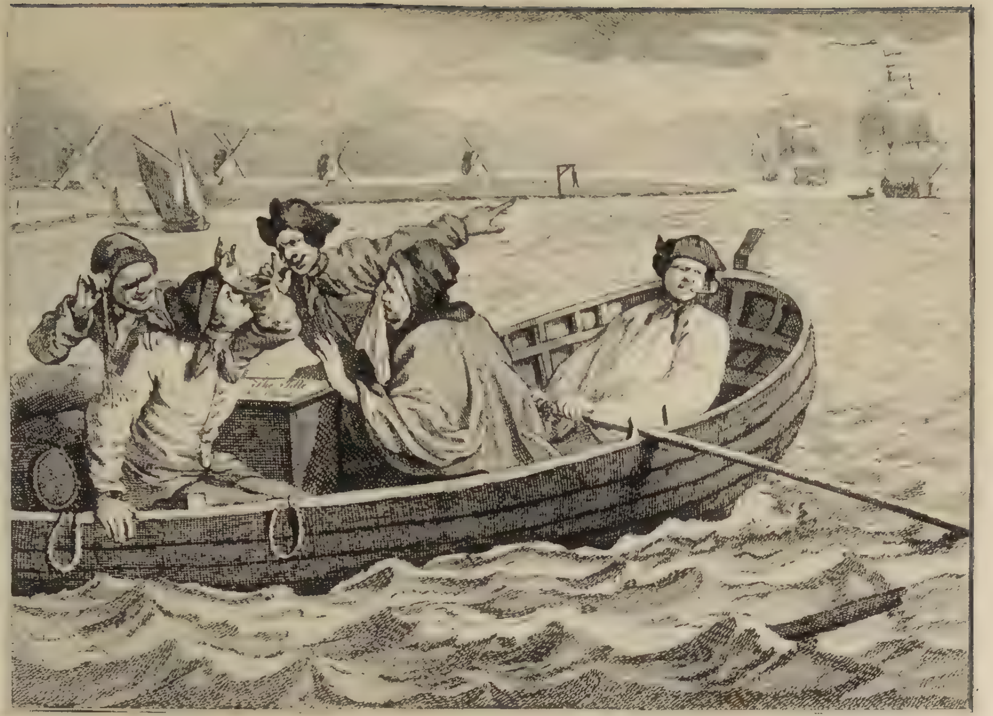
These buccaneers, then, were both hunters and butchers at the same time and they made known this double calling by wearing special clothes. The buccaneer wore a Spanish hat the brim of which had been cut away with the exception of a peak over the forehead that served as a shade from the sun. A coarse shirt hung loosely over his trousers, and he had an untanned leather belt round his waist. Short trousers, leather boots, a powder flask, a row of butcher's knives and a long gun completed the picturesque outfit. At first the meat which they buccaneered served their own needs. Later, sailors learnt to value it. Smugglers and pirates who sailed past them on the way to chase Spanish booty used to barter for it with powder, shot, money and plunder, so that it was worth the buccaneers' while to trade. With the years the number of buccaneers increased. Port Paix, Port Margot, Cape Francis on the north coast and Leogone at the cul-de-sac to the west of Hayti were their main settlements and markets.

So long as the number of these hunters was small the Spaniards, whose colonial power was weakened, did not take much notice of them, but when settlement after settlement began to spring up they gathered together and began to wage war against them with their usual recklessness and short-sightedness. They fell upon the buccaneers and killed many of them. The buccaneers in return began to chase the Spaniard as well as his oxen and boars, and soon the colonial war was in full swing.

The buccaneers now searched for a high place where they would be secure from attacks. It was not difficult to find; they chose an island, which lay opposite to Port Paix, and stood out of the water like a fortress. They called it Tortuga. Its only approach was from the south, where there was a bay flanked on both sides by headlands and so deep that it was suitable for all sizes of ships. Its coasts were otherwise unapproachable. Inland, however, it was like a tropical paradise. This island, Tortuga, was to become the buccaneers' fort of defence and for years it was to hold the whole of the West Indies under its control.

Its first settlers were probably a few English buccaneers. Later, a troupe of Frenchmen under a certain Levasseur settled there. Close to the shore and on a precipitous cliff he built for himself a château, which could only be reached by a rope ladder, and it was from there that he ruled his people. His end was the end of most tyrants, he was murdered by his own subjects. Still, he had done good work, for a regular colony arose with a harbour, church, sheds and a tavern. Active trade with the mainland had developed. Hunters came and exchanged their smoked meat and hides, and ships from Europe put in to port and traded usually with smuggled goods. A French trading company conceived the plan of sending to Tortuga a man who was to attempt to unite the various buccaneer settlements. He was a nobleman from Anjou, called Bertrand D'Ogeron, and under his influence Tortuga flourished.

The community grew from year to year. Men came from all parts of the West Indies—farmers, hunters, merchants and sailors—but there were no real workers. The Indian was dead, the negro was expensive and white men had therefore to be found. In those days there was a system of *engagés* by which men were engaged by agents or captains of industry for services in a colony. Most of them were young fellows with their heads full of adventurous ideas and a longing to see the world. They were promised mountains of gold, and after being soaked in gin were dragged on board some ship and to their astonishment they would find themselves in a colony, sold to a man whom they had to serve for three years. In those three hard years of service their master meant to get out of them whatever he could. Many of them perished, but those who survived had passed through a severe school and it was from this school that almost all the great buccaneers came. In D'Ogeron's time ships that were smuggling or



‘ THE IDLE ’PRENTICE TURN’D AWAY AND SENT TO SEA ’
From an Engraving after the Drawing by Hogarth

pirating in Spanish waters used to call regularly at the island, for the buccaneers' smoked meat was an excellent food for a long voyage. Hunters came in large numbers from Hayti to settle in Tortuga, for the Spaniards had wanted to rid themselves of their unwelcome guests and had systematically killed all the big game on the island. But they were mistaken in thinking that such a measure would be successful, for what the buccaneer could no longer find in the bush he sought elsewhere, namely on the sea. Profits were easier there and to be had on a grander scale than in the heat of the forest. They became pirates, and instead of hunting oxen they began to chase galleons. The Englishmen amongst them called themselves 'freebooters', which the French changed to 'flibustier'. This became 'filibuster' in English. At first there was a difference between the terms 'buccaneer' and 'filibuster', but as more and more buccaneers turned to piracy the expressions became confused. Both of them applied to West Indian pirates and to pirates in general, and have so remained to this day.

The buccaneers who exchanged their 'bucan' for a pirate's keel lived under the same social conditions as the hunters. They too formed groups and swore to mutual comradeship and honesty. Their beginnings were modest: twenty or thirty men procured a canoe, boarded the first fishing-smack which came their way and sailed off with her to Tortuga. A collection of some 150 men was soon gathered, and they elected the greatest rogue among them as their captain. He had command only during action, for at other times he was no different from the rest. A few Articles were then set down to which they all most solemnly pledged themselves by giving their oath and signature. These articles were called *chasse-partie* and regulated the division of anticipated booty. The share of each man from captain to cabin-boy was fixed and set down in these Articles. They often borrowed their vessels or had them fitted out by a body of promoters, in which case the owners or the financial supporters usually received a third of the booty. If the Governor furnished them with letters of reprisal, which later was frequently the case, then he or the Government could claim a tenth of the profit.

After such preparations they would put out to sea. Each man had to bring his own weapons. At first not much value was attached to guns, the main thing was to have a handful of good muskets which hunters had in plenty. Otherwise, the pirate's outfit was singularly modest: a shabby hat, or a brightly coloured cloth in the shape of a turban, a coarse shirt tucked into a pair of dirty trousers, and a belt or a scarlet sash round the waist into which were stuck pistols and a long knife. They usually set out first of all to some buccaneer settlement to get a supply of beef, pork or turtles, but they valued daring and contempt of death more than provisions. Life on board was none too comfortable. The ships were crowded and there was hardly room to lie down. Men had to sleep on the open deck as the cabins were only for the officers.

During a voyage all eyes were set on the horizon, for the first man to spy a prize could claim one and a half shares of the booty. If a sail came in sight the whole scene would instantly change. Their ship was at once prepared for action, and it was not long before the pirates boarded the enemy ship. Of course they sometimes caught a Tartar when a well-disguised man-of-war would allow them to come on board and then cut them down. But they were usually sure of results, for the Spanish trading vessels were for the most part poorly furnished with men and guns.

If the prize was a good ship most of the men would change over from their own inferior vessel so as to plunder on a larger scale. It was then the cabin-boys' business to set fire to the abandoned ship or to blow it up, and at the last moment escape from it as quickly as possible. Then each man had to swear that he had not hidden anything of the booty. If one of them was found to be a liar, he was either thrown overboard or if they were anywhere near a desert island he was rowed to it and marooned there.

There is no doubt where the spoil went to. The treasure which had been bought with so much blood soon changed hands in the Tortuga taverns. It was spent on drink, women, dice, or was stolen.

It is remarkable that these godless libertines had a certain amount of religious feeling. Before setting out on a voyage the buccaneers would gather for divine service, and every Sunday the rough pirate chief would pull the Bible out of its box and would read out of it to his rascally congregation. They would embrace one another before action and forgive each other any evil that had been done. After a successful action they would offer up prayers of thanks to the heavens and would allocate a portion of the booty to the Church. The possessions and part of the booty belonging to those of their comrades who had been killed and who had left no heirs were given by the terms of most of the *chasse-partie* to the Church or the poor.

These were the men who, after the great Elizabethans, entered the lists against the Spaniards. They were an international rabble, who began by chasing small vessels that were trading in the Antilles. Later on they attacked the galleons of the flota for which they lay in wait in the Straits of Yucatan and elsewhere. They used to watch to see if one of the vessels drifted off or lagged behind. Then they would rush to the place and attack her.

A type of buccaneer of the old school was Olonner, or L'Olonnais, so called because he came from Port les Sables d'Olonne in the Vendée. His real name was Jean David Nau. He is of importance, because beginning with him the buccaneers turned from a life of piracy to extensive voyages where the victims were towns and entire colonies.

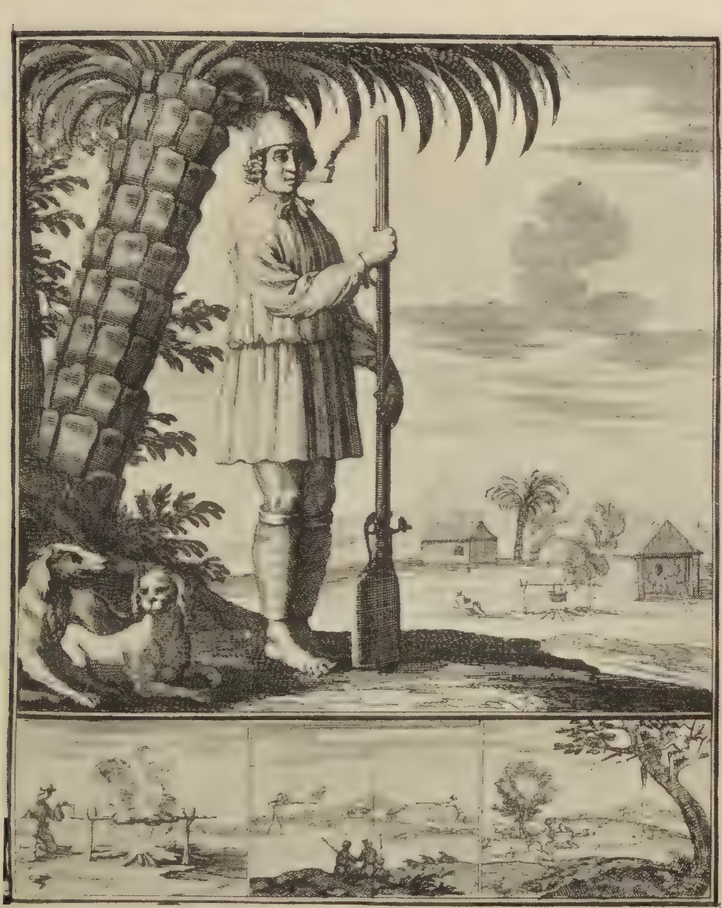
Olonner's career was the usual one. He was picked out as a boy by an agent of the West Indies Company and taken to the Antilles where he served his slave years. He then became a hunter-buccaneer in the forests of Hayti and finally a pirate. He distinguished himself to such an extent that Ogeron entrusted him with the command of a ship with which he undertook the most daring voyages. He was called the ' Spaniards' scourge ', for he pursued them with such fanatical hatred that he never on principle showed them any mercy, but used to slaughter all his prisoners or throw them overboard. Once, however, the Spaniards nearly caught him. His ship ran aground on the coast of Campêche. He and his men were attacked by a Spanish troop and many were killed or taken prisoner. Olonner was wounded. He only saved himself by smearing his face and body with sand and blood and by lying amongst the corpses, so that the Spaniards thought he had been killed. No sooner was the enemy away than he jumped up and ran into the bush, where he lived for a time until his wounds healed. He then disguised himself in Spanish clothes which he had taken from one of the dead, and set off for Campêche, where he wandered about unrecognized and heard people rejoicing that he was dead. He made friends with two slaves to whom he promised liberty if they would get him one of their master's boats. They agreed, and one dark night the trio escaped to Tortuga.

L'Olonnais sat here for a time with empty pockets until a man offered him a fishing smack for an enterprise. Twenty-one buccaneers soon came forward who were ready to join him, and the only thing now was to find an object for the voyage. There was a village on the north coast of Cuba, Los Cayos, which traded in tobacco, sugar and hides and sent from time to time four barques full of goods to Havana. L'Olonnais had designs on these ships and set to work immediately. Shortly after leaving Tortuga he was joined by a second boat of buccaneers.

Both vessels cruised for a while by the Cuban coast without, however, sighting the barques. They soon discovered the reason. Their intentions had been betrayed by a fisherman and the ships had remained in port. The matter was as good as hopeless.

Meanwhile, the Governor of Havana had been informed of L'Olonnais's movements and he sent out an armed ship to capture him. This ship anchored in Los Cayos without having seen the pirate.

It was night. The moonlight shone over the waters. Suddenly the watchman on board the Spanish ship, which the pirates had seen and intended to capture, heard the



A BUCCANEER
From an Engraving

quiet strokes of oars and saw under the cover of darkness a boat approach the opposite bank.

The watch called out :

‘ Where do you hail from ? ’

Some one named a place in good Spanish.

‘ Have you met any pirates ? ’

‘ No, we have not seen anything of them.’

The watch was satisfied. Two boats quietly anchored on either side of the banks of the narrow river at Los Cayos. The Spanish ship was between them. When morning dawned the man on duty saw the boats, but there was no trace of the occupants.

He did not need to wait long. A hail of missiles suddenly whistled through the rigging. Alarm ! The captain and crew ran out of their cabins, but they could hardly reach the guns. Terrible firing from both sides chased them up and down the deck, and they completely lost their heads, so that most of them fell a prey to the bullets before they knew what it was all about. The pirates sprang out from behind their boats, pushed off from shore and boarded her while the crew fled below deck.

L’Olonnais triumphantly flourished his broadsword. The ship and her booty were his.

He set upon the wounded and they were all brutally slaughtered. Only one was left alive to tell the Governor of Havana what he had witnessed.

The pirates then transferred to the prize, which was a very fine frigate, and they cruised between Hayti and the mainland where they captured a ship that had only just left Maracaibo, laden with silver and other valuables. They returned with it to Tortuga where they were given a hearty welcome.

L’Olonnais’s star was in the ascendant. The last expedition had made him famous and rich. And now he had a more ambitious plan. His passion for adventure stirred another successful buccaneer called Michel le Basque to join him. Others came too. In the end the whole of Tortuga participated with money and ships. No less than 400 picked men signed the *chasse-partie* and were divided up on to eight vessels. The object of the enterprise was not piracy, but the sacking and pillaging of some rich Spanish town.

The squadron left Tortuga in April 1667 and sailed first to Bayala, a buccaneer settlement on the north coast of Hayti, where they took in a supply of smoked meat and where the forces were increased by a band of adventure-seeking hunters. Sailing farther they captured two good prizes. One of them was immediately sent back to Tortuga, unloaded there and later rejoined the squadron bringing fresh victuals and more men, so that the whole force consisted of some 660 men.

And now they were to decide on the goal. Two French pilots had been captured on one of the prizes from Maracaibo, and they were able to tell them a great deal about the riches of that town. The pirates' choice fell on Maracaibo.

The town lies on the Venezuelan coast in the Gulf of Maracaibo at the point where the gulf flows through a narrow passage into a lagoon. This passage is closed in by two islands, of which the one to the east, Islas de la Vigilias, then possessed a fortification, whereas the one to the west, Islas de la Palomas, was defended by a stronghold up on a height and had sixteen heavy guns behind its gabions. The channel between these islands led to the lagoon and to Maracaibo, so that both were well protected from the sea. The lagoon was a wide lake with many sandbanks and small islands. Merida, the chief town of the Andes, lay to the south; and between the three towns—Gibraltar, Merida, and Maracaibo—there was an active trade.

After a few weeks' sailing the buccaneers came in sight of the coast of the mainland.

They cast anchor so that they might not be sighted from the Islas de la Vigilias. The plan was to take possession of the stronghold on Islas de la Palomas as quickly as possible.

The following day the pirate squadron openly sailed past the entrance so that the Spaniards might know what lay ahead of them. About a mile from the fort they cast anchor and landed a strong attacking force, which immediately cut across in the direction of Islas de la Palomas. They attacked the fort and were superior in number to the Spaniards. In spite of this the Spaniards fought for three hours before they surrendered. Once in possession of the fort the pirates immediately spiked the guns and set fire to the place. The following afternoon they cast anchor before Maracaibo which they bombarded heavily. They might have saved their ammunition, for the nest was empty. The Spaniards had been warned and had either fled to Gibraltar or had hidden in the woods.

And now after four weeks at sea the pirates were again able to enjoy a comfortable home. They fell upon the rich stores of provisions, they caroused and gormandized, but they found neither gold nor valuables.

The pirate band stayed in Maracaibo for fourteen days, and when there was nothing else to plunder L'Olonnais decided to move to Gibraltar.

This town had meanwhile appealed to the Governor of Merida, who came to its aid with 400 men, so that in all there were 800 able Spaniards defending it. The Governor then ordered a new path to be cut through the bush, which led over absolutely impassable and boggy ground. This was to draw the assailants in, and he gave orders for an entrenchment furnished with six guns to be made at the opening, which would control the advance. The pirates realized that they would not be able to avoid a battle. L'Olonnais held a council of war and decided that the place would not be so easy to take as he had thought, since the Spaniards had had sufficient time to make themselves secure.

They cast anchor that evening about three-quarters of a nautical mile from the town and before sunrise they landed an attacking force of 380 men, each one armed with a knife and two pistols. They grouped themselves silently in the dark and as a sign of comradeship they shook hands. Then they marched in good order towards the town, L'Olonnais and the French pilot leading them. The pilot, of course, brought them to the barricaded way, and when they saw their way was barred they did not know what to do until they discovered the other route. It was now morning, and L'Olonnais ordered the attack through the newly made path. They marched forward under Spanish fire from guns and muskets. Branches, twigs and dirt flew into their faces as they marched and the ground gave way under their feet, so that they almost stuck in the mud. Terrified, they recoiled, but L'Olonnais ordered them to lay the path with branches and tree trunks and then they continued the march. At last they were through the wood and were faced with the entrenchment with its six heavy guns brazenly pointing at them. And here again they sank up to their knees in mud. The Spaniards fired heavily, then they came out from behind the ramparts and fell upon the disconcerted pirates and chased them back.

The pirates did not dare to repeat their attack, but once again sought the barricaded way. This was quite impossible, so again they pursued the attack along the marshy path, but this time they only got half-way and no farther, for the firing was too heavy.

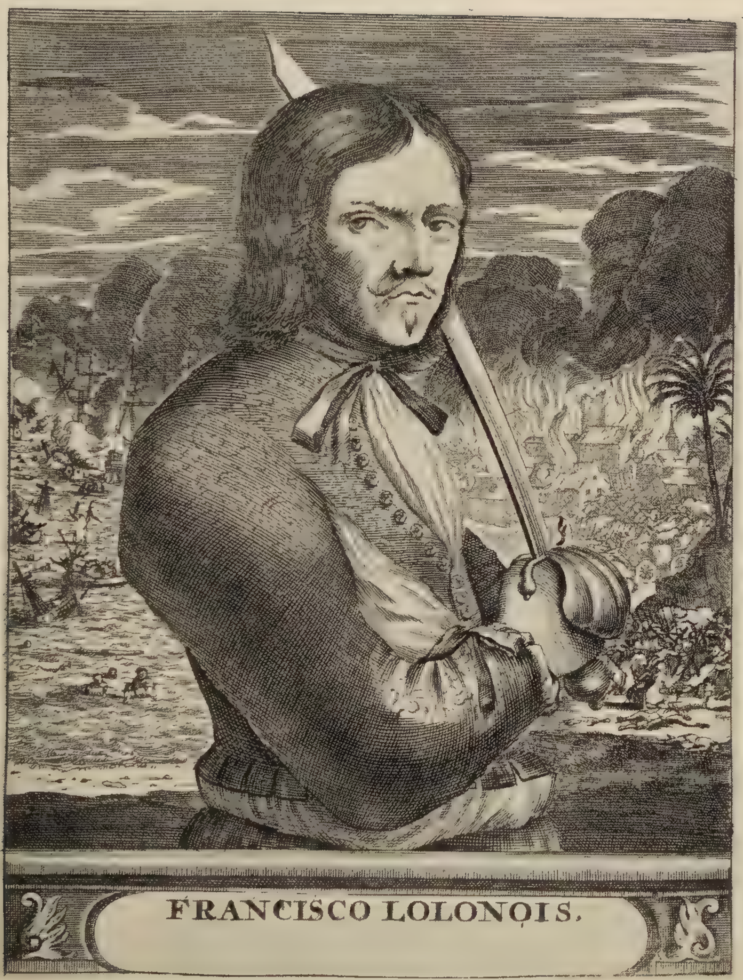
L'Olonnais then tried a ruse.

He gave the order to retreat.

'They are fleeing, they are fleeing! Up! After them!' shouted the Spaniards, and left their secure entrenchment. The buccaneers allowed themselves to be chased until they were out of gunshot. Then they suddenly wheeled round, fell upon the pursuers, and in a short time two hundred Spaniards were killed and the rest fled or surrendered. The fort was seized and the town fell with it.

The pirates tore the Spanish flag down and hoisted their own. Most of the inhabitants had not waited for their arrival, but had fled. The rest were seized and locked into the church, together with the captured soldiers.

L'Olonnais then created order. The place was full of corpses, which were put into two boats and taken out to sea to be sunk. After weeks of ransacking, Gibraltar was as bare as Maracaibo. They transported everything they could find on to their ships. They ruled here for four weeks. Now and again a prisoner was dragged out of the church


FRANCISCO LOLONOIS.

FRANÇOIS L'OLONNAIS
From an Engraving

and tortured until he divulged where his treasures lay, but most of them had nothing to divulge. L'Olonnais sent four of his men into the bush to find the inhabitants who had fled and to treat with them for a ransom. He demanded 10,000 pieces of eight payable within two days, in return for which he would leave the town intact; otherwise he would reduce it to ashes. Two days passed and the money was not forthcoming. The scoundrels then set fire to the place. The prisoners were in despair and implored them to put out the fire, the sum would be paid. But they could only partially quell the flames. An entire district of the town and the convent church were burnt down. At last the money was produced, but the pirates told them that this money was only for the buildings and the prisoners were to be ransomed separately. Each Spaniard had a price put on his head. Again negotiations, and again the money was paid. It was only after this that they returned to Maracaibo for further ransom. Maracaibo bought itself free with 20,000 pieces of eight.

Now they sailed straight for the south coast of Hayti, where they cast anchor at the Isle la Vache. The whole of the booty was taken ashore and divided amongst the pirates. After much discussion and argument each man received his proper share according to the *chasse-partie*, and they all sailed off happily to Tortuga where a ship had come in from France just at the right time, bringing wine, brandy and other good things.

L'Olonnais became the hero of Tortuga, and it was not long before he was off on another expedition with six ships and 700 men. This time they were to attack the coast of Nicaragua, but a protracted calm on the high seas forced them to change their plans. Sacking and pillaging as they went, they sailed up the coast in a westerly direction until they reached a small Spanish port, Puerto Cavallos, where they surprised and captured a well-armed ship.

San Pedro, an inland town, had a good indigo trade. L'Olonnais set off towards it with 300 buccaneers, but the Spaniards in San Pedro had been warned and had set ambushes on the way, so that the buccaneers lost many of their men. At last after great difficulties the town surrendered, but the capture was a disappointment. There was an enormous quantity of indigo in the town, but not a trace of gold or silver. Out of revenge L'Olonnais set the town on fire. And so the pirates had to march back to the coast with empty pockets. Many of them, disgusted with this fruitless expedition, parted from L'Olonnais.

L'Olonnais and the rest of his men took to piracy, but there were fresh disappointments for them and finally shipwreck and hunger. He and a few men on a raft landed on the coast of Darien.

Here the redskins fell upon them and hacked L'Olonnais to pieces.

CHAPTER VII

THE KING OF THE BUCCANEERS

THE honour of having surpassed L'Olonnais in deeds and villainy belongs by right to Henry Morgan.

Tortuga, the stronghold of the buccaneers, had a rival in Jamaica. This was Port Royal—the buccaneers' nest from which for years on end they swooped down upon the Spanish galleons.

Port Royal, like Tortuga, was in name a colony, but in reality it was a pirates' den. Jamaica stood out like England's clenched fist in the face of the Spanish colonial kingdom. Only a few hours separated it from the gates of the golden castle of Panama and the rich treasures of the South Sea. This opened out boundless possibilities, and it was Mansfeld, an ordinary buccaneer—probably a Dutchman from Curaçao—who conceived the magnificent idea of founding a buccaneer state on the Spanish ruins in the West Indies. Mansfeld had clearly recognized the strategic importance of a small rocky island, S. Luis de Providencia, on which a Spanish garrison stood like an outpost before their colonies. His attempt to found a buccaneer republic was, however, frustrated.

Mansfeld's helper and vice-admiral was Henry Morgan.

Like all Morgans, he came from Wales, where his father was a prosperous landowner. Love of adventure took the boy to Bristol where he fell into the hands of a slave-trader. He is next heard of as a well-established filibuster in Jamaica. Mansfeld picked him out and shared with him the command during his great expedition. After Mansfeld's death Morgan gave soon up the idea of a large expedition for single voyages, which were all the more profitable.

Governor Modyford had heard that the Spaniards were raising troops to get Jamaica into their power again. He therefore sent Morgan with a ship to the south coast of

Cuba to discover how far preparations had proceeded. Morgan stayed for two months among the islands which are so numerous round Cuba. There he was successful in bringing together a squadron of ten ships and 500 men, French and English, who were willing to join him. With these men he undertook his first large plundering expedition, which ended with the pillage of Puerto del Principe on Cuba. But this did not cover his expenses. Also there were disagreements between the two nationalities, which ended by the Frenchmen leaving the venture. The Englishmen, however, were soon reinforced by their own countrymen, so that with 430 men and nine ships Morgan began to look round for a fresh victim. And his choice fell on Porto Bello. A bold stroke. The place, on account of its position, was exceptionally well fortified. The town, in the shape of a crescent, lay in a round bay, the narrow entrance to which was flanked on both sides by forts. A very strong fortification, a citadel more than a fort, also stood in the town itself. The gold from the Incas and the silver from the Potosi and Darien mines were stored in this stronghold before being taken to Spain by the galleons. Here the Spaniards felt absolutely safe.

One evening Morgan and his men cast anchor to the west of Porto Bello in the mouth of a river where the ship could be well concealed. They then rowed along the coast until they came close to the town. Towards midnight they went ashore and quietly set out on the march. At dawn they surprised the sentry who was posted farthest from the town. They seized him and dragged him to the pirate chief, who was holding the thumb-screws in readiness for him. Out of terror and surprise the man told them everything they wanted to know.

Very quietly they crept up to the fort, which stood close to the town, and, unobserved, they surrounded it from all sides. When the circle was closed Morgan sent the prisoner to summon the besieged to surrender or they would all be hacked to pieces.

They replied with powder and shot. This was the sign for the pirates to storm the rampart from all sides, and the

Spaniards, who had not dreamt they were completely surrounded, were soon overpowered.

Morgan now wanted to strike terror throughout the town. He ordered officers and men to be locked into the fort, set fire to the powder magazine, and blew up the whole fort with everything in it.

It was a terrible scene. The citizens ran about shrieking wildly. The soldiers followed the drum and trumpet and together with the Governor occupied the citadel where most of the inhabitants had taken refuge.

When the assailants stormed through the streets to the citadel guns thundered out towards them. The firing lasted for hours, and the pirates, who were less protected, lost many men. But they slowly made their way to the walls. Morgan ordered pots to be collected, filled with powder, a slow-match stuck in each one and then thrown over the wall as hand-grenades, together with burning pitch-balls and other fire-brands. The defenders replied with boiling tar and large stones. At each attempt to scale the walls a number of buccaneers fell back dead.

The citadel seemed impregnable. The assailants turned back exhausted and were ready to give up the place they had won. Even Morgan doubted a successful issue. Then suddenly he saw the English flag go up on a small entrenchment. A cry of victory rang out and gave him fresh hope.

And now he conceived a devilish scheme.

He ordered ten or twelve ladders to be brought which were so wide that three men could climb up them side by side. Then he had the nuns and monks brought from the convents and monasteries, for they were to place the ladders against the walls.

Before doing this, however, he once again invited the Governor to surrender. The latter was a man of exceptional determination and answered that as long as he lived the fort would not be surrendered.

Then the ghastly plan was put into operation. No pleas or tears availed the monks and nuns. They were forced with barbaric cruelty to take hold of the ladders, and the living wall was pushed forward with kicks and blows. The wretches prayed loudly to their Saviour, crossed themselves and sang litanies. And with heartrending cries they implored the Governor to spare them and to surrender. But the old Castilian knew no mercy, for behind the cowls he saw the advancing pirate band. Under heavy fire the ladders were placed to the walls and the pirates began to throw hand-bombs and fire-balls in among the Spaniards. Some fled, other surrendered, but the Governor held his ground. He stood pale and bleeding, his back against the wall, sword in hand.

They invited him to surrender.

'Never!' he cried. 'I would rather die as a brave soldier than allow myself to be hanged by you rogues.'

His wife and daughter went down on their knees before him and with tears implored him to surrender.

He shook his head.

The pirates then tried to take him alive, but those who approached him paid with their lives. They moved away from him. One of the bandits quietly pointed a pistol at him and shot him dead.

The buccaneers had triumphed. The prisoners, both men and women, were all locked into the fort, as well as the wounded, who were allowed no other relief than their cries and pains.

Night fell. The fort was wrapped in silence. But the coarse shouts of the victors rang out from the houses—they were enjoying themselves after their bloody deeds. Fifty men would have sufficed to put an end to this set of vagabonds.

They plundered during the next few days.. The most important and the richest among the prisoners were horribly tortured so that they should betray where they had hidden their riches.

After fourteen days Morgan decided on the return voyage and demanded 100,000 pieces of eight as ransom. The despairing citizens sent to Panama to inform the Governor of what had happened. The Governor, who had already had news of it, raised a troop and advanced on the pirates. Instead of fleeing away from him, some hundred pirates marched against him and completely routed him. He then resorted to written threats, to which Morgan coldly retorted that he would sooner murder every one and set fire to the place than leave without the ransom.

The poor inhabitants of Porto Bello were forced to scratch the silver coins together until they had gathered the 100,000 to ransom themselves and to prevent the pirates from setting fire to the place. The buccaneers on the other hand had their pockets filled. They had 250,000 pieces of eight, much merchandise, cloth, linen and silk to share out among themselves.

Morgan now returned to Jamaica. Here Governor Modyford was wondering how he should account for this expedition of investigation, but the buccaneer helped him out by a brilliant report in which it was said that they ‘ had left the town in the same good condition in which they had found it ’. They had also treated the inhabitants so well that ‘ some ladies of rank ’ and other prisoners whom they wanted to send to Panama refused this on the grounds that ‘ they were now prisoners of men who looked after their honour better than people in Panama ’. In any case Modyford would hardly have been in the position to put a stop to such doings. The buccaneers were too strong for him. Morgan's name had such a magnetic force that only a few weeks later he was on his way to Cuba to fit out a fresh expedition. He had his recruiting-place on the island of La Vache, where many pirates joined forces with him, among them a French vessel. But then quarrelling began. The French ship had grown short of victuals on the journey and had plundered an English merchant vessel. The English discovered this and insisted upon retaliation, which Morgan soon settled in his own way. He politely invited the French captain and his officers to dinner and took this opportunity to make them all prisoners.

‘ That's Harry Morgan's way ’, he would say on such occasions. A few days later they decided at a council of war to make for Cartagena. This decision they celebrated by a sumptuous banquet on board the *Oxford*, a man-of-war which had previously joined Morgan. Suddenly there was a mighty crash. The main-mast fell across the table, the deck flew in different directions, and in a second a mighty explosion in the powder room had turned the fine ship into a black, smoking wreck. Only thirty men survived. They were the chief pirates, who were dining in the cabin, and the noble Morgan was among them.

The inquiry brought forth that the explosion was the result of carelessness on the part of the gunner. But they put the blame on the French who were imprisoned on the *Oxford*. So their ship was confiscated, while they were sent to Jamaica, where they were kept prisoner for a long time.

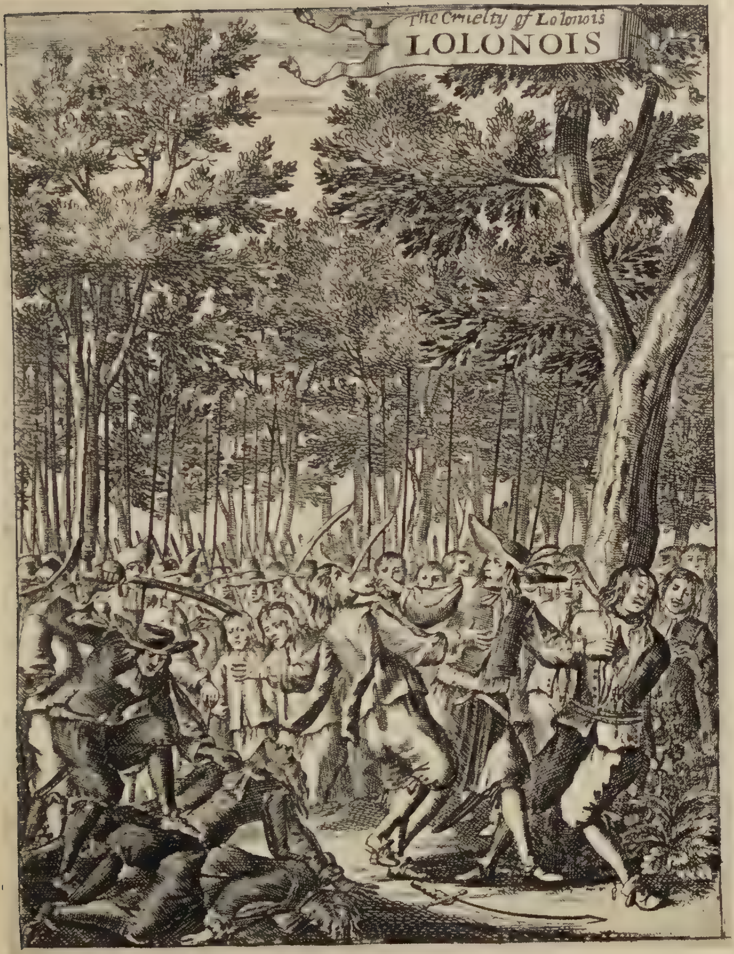
By this incident the undertaking was somewhat disturbed. Some ships had left the fleet before this and had not returned, so that in the end Morgan had only half of his original force—some 500 men and eight ships. So he altered his plan about Cartagena. He had in his fleet a French captain who had taken part in Olonnais's voyage to Maracaibo. This man painted their enterprise in such glowing colours that Morgan decided to imitate Olonnais's adventure.

Thus a fresh storm gathered over the unfortunate town.

The landing in Maracaibo bay took place in exactly the same manner as L'Olonnais's. The Fort de la Barra, which was now more strongly fortified, resisted their attacks for a whole day. The Spaniards quietly abandoned it in the night. When the buccaneers at last grew suspicious at the unusual silence they carefully entered it and searched the place.

The next morning they made for Maracaibo in boats, as the ships were not able to get across the sand-banks on account of the low tide. And just as with L'Olonnais—the whole town had been abandoned. They plundered all they could find, and three weeks later they sailed on to Gibraltar where they were met with cannon fire.

The landing was conducted by the French captain who had fought here once before under L'Olonnais. Morgan led his men through the wood and invaded the town without any difficulty.


The Cruelty of Lolonois
LOLONOIS

THE CRUELTY OF L'OLONNAIS
From an Engraving

But the streets and houses were empty—the cannons had been spiked, the stores evacuated.

For days on end they systematically raided the neighbourhood, and in this way they were helped by a negro who led them to the buried treasures. One hiding-place after another was unearthed, several prisoners massacred on the spot, the others bound and driven to the town, and the discovered goods and chattels carried there on mules. And each prisoner was called to book. Among them was a sixty-year-old Portuguese whom the negro pointed out as being a very rich man. The Portuguese was tortured until he promised a ransom of 1,000 pieces of eight. Others fared still worse ; they were mutilated, crucified or burnt.

Yet in spite of these unheard-of cruelties Morgan was not satisfied. The majority of the inhabitants and the chief treasures of the town still remained hidden from him. He then had the good fortune to capture a negro slave who betrayed these to him. He knew where the Governor was, and that all the possessions of the citizens had been stored on several ships which were hiding in the mouth of a certain river.

Morgan immediately divided his men into two parties. One he sent off to the boats and the other one he led himself against the Governor. The latter had entrenched himself on an island in the middle of a river. When he heard that the pirates were approaching he withdrew into the very centre of his hiding-place on a high rock, which could be reached only by a narrow path. Morgan, who had not the slightest idea of the impenetrable country, marched for days before reaching the place. The expedition was a complete failure. Except for a few prisoners the pirate chief returned with empty hands to Gibraltar. The other expedition had achieved more. A few days later it returned with the vessels on which the Spaniards had hidden their possessions. These ships, however, were not too well laden, for the Spaniards had been warned of the attack and had taken away the most valuable goods. Yet they had left quite enough behind.

Meanwhile, Morgan heard that the Spaniards had again besieged Fort de la Barra at the exit from the lagoon and that they were attempting to cut off his return. So he hastily urged a departure. He could hardly hope for a large ransom. He was content with 5,000 pieces of eight. Four days later he was in Maracaibo where he received further alarming news. Three Spanish men-of-war were standing outside the Bay of Maracaibo and were waiting for the fox to come out of his hole.

This was not a false alarm.

Morgan would not believe it at first, and dispatched a boat to spy out whether it was true. And it was true. There were three large men-of-war with 40, 30, and 24 large guns, against which the pirates could put only 14 small culverins into battle.

Their spirits ebbed visibly. Only the arch-rogue Morgan remained calm and thoughtful. Audacity was the best weapon. So he sent a letter to the admiral of the Spanish squadron in which he demanded the immediate payment of a heavy ransom if he did not wish his ships to be set alight in Maracaibo.

He had not miscalculated. The admiral, Don Alonso del Campo y Espinosa, made the first mistake by condescending to answer the rogues. He demanded restitution of the entire plunder as well as release of slaves and prisoners. Only then would he allow the pirate ships to sail away unmolested.

Morgan, whose object was only to win time by this letter, now became hopeful. He summoned his men, read out the Spaniard's answer and asked them if they were willing to sacrifice their booty which they had won. The answer was, ' Fight to the last drop of blood.'

Still Morgan continued the negotiations to gain more time for his own preparations. He now offered half the slaves and all the prisoners, and proposed to leave Maracaibo unmolested.

Don Alonso refused this as being dishonest and was more emphatic. If the buccaneers did not surrender within two days he would make them.

Meanwhile work was proceeding at high pressure. Everything was prepared for action.

When all was ready they transported anything of value and all their female prisoners to their largest vessel, the male prisoners were put in the second, and the remaining booty was stowed away in the others. Shortly before they went on board, Morgan summoned his men again and made them give their solemn oath that they would fight bravely to the last breath and would not accept any pardon. And he promised rewards to all those who would distinguish themselves.

They sailed off, the fire-ship leading.

Under cover of darkness they sailed up to them within cannon range, cast anchor and kept a sharp look-out through the night.

At early dawn they weighed anchor and sent the fire-ship straight towards the Almirante. The Spaniards also cleared their decks for action and trained their guns on to the unusually small man-of-war whose manœuvres they did not at first understand. And she was close to them before they could discharge their first shots.

The pirate ship crashed heavily against the side of the large ship—at that same moment the pirates jumped into a boat and rowed away. A terrible explosion shook the bowels of the galleon. Other explosions followed. Suddenly the stern of the Spaniard's ship was in flames and the bowsprit headed into the water. Confusion followed. At the first explosion her crew had jumped into boats or into the water and were now swimming or rowing ashore. The second of the three men-of-war now sailed towards the shore. The buccaneers immediately followed them. They set fire to this Spanish ship and the third was finally boarded by Morgan.

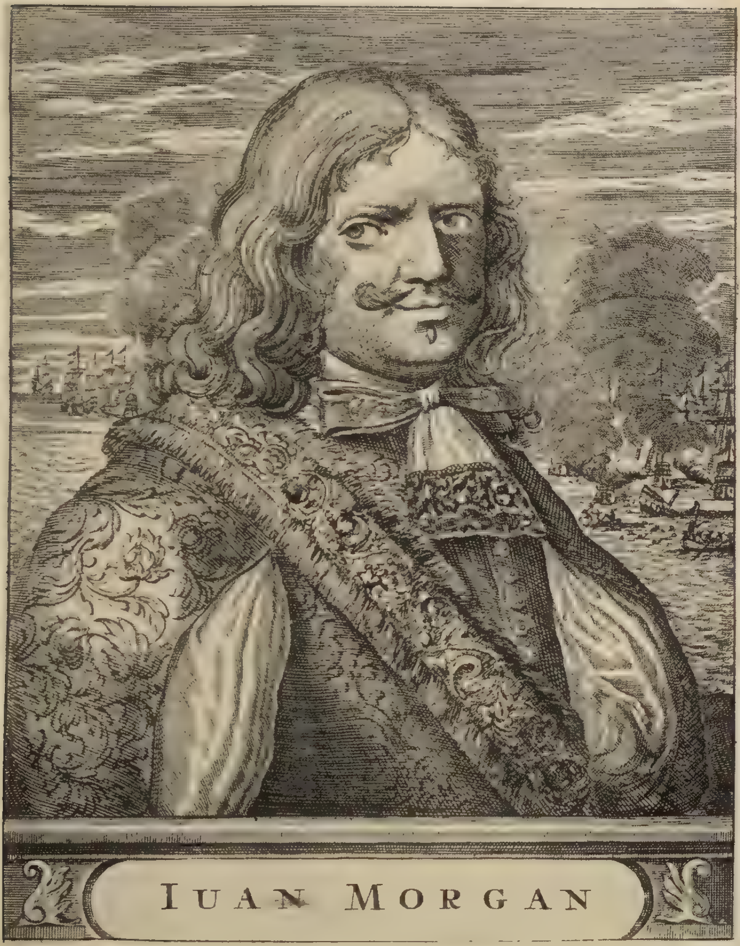
The buccaneers themselves were very surprised at what they had succeeded in doing. Morgan immediately landed with his men to conquer the fort. They surrounded it as far as it could be surrounded from land and kept it all day under musketry fire. Towards night they attempted to storm it, but they were fired upon so severely by the Spaniards that thirty of them were killed, and many more wounded were sent back to the boats. Since the fort was so well fortified there was nothing to be done but to return to Maracaibo.

Before doing this Morgan ordered the men to bring up all those Spaniards who were running about on the ship's ruins, so that he might discover from them details about the enemy's strength and arms. He heard from one captured pilot that the three men-of-war were half a squadron which the Spanish Government had sent from Europe against the buccaneers, and, moreover, that in the stranded vessel there was still some silver to be found to the value of 40,000 pieces of eight. He therefore immediately sent a boat back to see if they could still save this treasure.

From Maracaibo he again sent a messenger to the admiral, who had succeeded in escaping to the fort from his burning vessel, and he again demanded ransom for the captured town. The admiral flatly refused. Negotiations were continued without him but with the citizens of Maracaibo, with whom Morgan agreed in the end to accept a ransom of 20,000 pieces of eight and 500 oxen. In spite of this he did not release the prisoners, but kept them on the ships so that the admiral might allow him to sail through the passage unmolested. He sent a deputation to Don Alonso to ask him to allow the pirates to sail away so that the prisoners might not perish. The Don would not give in. They had behaved like cowards and could now take the consequences. When Morgan heard this he answered :

'If Don Alonso will not let me through, then I will find means to do this without him.'

At the entrance he used an ingenious trick to get away. Throughout a whole day he had boats coming ashore thickly packed with armed men and storming implements. These men did not remain on the shore, however, but lay down flat at the bottom of the boats, covered themselves with leaves and brushwood, and were rowed peacefully back to the ship by two or three oarsmen. It appeared from the fort that the pirates had planned an attack during the night—the Spaniards therefore veered round all their heavy guns from the sea to the land side, from where they might expect the attack. In the night Morgan ordered anchors


IUAN MORGAN

JOHN MORGAN
From an Engraving

to be weighed quietly and without hoisting the sails. The ships drifted with the currents into the passage. And, although the moon was shining, the Spaniards did not notice them before they suddenly hoisted all their sails almost opposite the fort and sailed past in the full wind. It was too late to turn their guns round to the sea again.

And so the pirates safely returned to Jamaica.

When these matters were heard of in Europe the Spanish Ambassador in London demanded a stern punishment for Morgan and the Governor Modyford, and restitution of the damages for the plunder. The English Government answered most courteously that the peace they had concluded with Spain did not apply to the West Indies and incidentally laid before them a long list of English vessels that had been attacked.

In Port Royal, however, there were rejoicings for weeks. The money which it had taken the Spaniards years to gather was squandered in taverns and brothels in a few nights, so that many of the men were ready to set out on a fresh adventure.

Modyford and his happy buccaneers soon decided that the time had come for another raid.

This time Morgan fixed Tortuga as the gathering-point. Prowling thieves and highwaymen from all parts of the West Indies met there and presented themselves before the arch-fiend, who received them. He took on his old accomplices without looking at them. As for the others the more rascally a man looked the better he liked him.

The number which thus came together amounted to 2,000 men and 37 ships. This was an armada of which at that time a great European power need not have been ashamed. Morgan divided this fleet into squadrons and appointed several vice-admirals. Several squadrons then sailed along the coasts of Hayti, Cuba, and the mainland to find victuals for the crews. A good prize containing maize was captured in Rio de la Hache. Smoked meat and turtle meat was found and all this was divided among the vessels.

The whole armada assembled near Cape Tiburon, and the captains took counsel together to decide against whom the attack should be directed. They immediately chose the greatest and the richest place of all—Panama—whose walls no enemy had stormed.

The *chasse-partie* was drawn up with better terms than ever before. Morgan as leader was to receive the hundredth part of the whole booty and each captain apart from the usual share for his ship was to receive eight times as much as each sailor, and the doctor was to get 200 pieces of eight for his medicine chest. Various other payments were determined, and everything was to be payable immediately after the first booty.

Morgan did not hurry straight to the gates of the golden castle, but reverted to the plan his master Mansfeld had had, and wanted to protect his rear by taking Providencia, which would be his base. This island had been wonderfully fortified by the Spaniards since its reconquest, but the Dons had never reckoned on such an armada. A siege laid by only a quarter of Morgan's men soon ended with the commandant making a curious agreement with the buccaneer. They agreed to have a mock battle with him in which the Hidalgos would shoot into the air with much noise and after that willingly allow themselves to be taken prisoner by the corsairs. Thus their honour was saved.

Morgan's first step to success had been made. He could now advance against Panama by two ways; either overland by Porto Bello and the Street of Gold, or by boat up the river Chagres to Venta Cruces and from there to the town along Drake's route. Morgan decided on the latter.

The stray Spanish fort, San Lorenzo, at the mouth of the river Chagres had first to be conquered. He, therefore, sent his vice-admiral, Bradely, in advance with a squadron of four ships with the order to conquer the fort. Bradely and his men at last reached the walls after great difficulty and under heavy fire, and were able to throw fire-balls over the palisades. The defenders answered with hand-grenades.

And then a remarkable thing happened. One of the buccaneers was hit in the back with an arrow, which stuck fast in his flesh. He drew the arrow out, wrapped some cotton-wool round it, stuck it in his musket and sent it back to the town. The cotton-wool caught fire from the powder. It flew over to a hut which was covered with palm leaves, and soon the whole place was in flames. The next morning the assailants saw the results of the fire. Towards midday Bradely and his men gathered for the last onset against the widest gap in the ramparts and where the Spanish Governor was standing with some twenty-five soldiers armed with muskets, pikes, stones and swords. But the buccaneers forced their way forward. The Governor fled to the main guard-house and defended himself till he was killed. Only thirty of the 314 defenders survived. The dead were thrown down from the cliffs into the sea, the wounded and the women were taken to the church, which was turned into a hospital.

A few days later Morgan appeared with his fleet and was triumphantly carried into the fortress.

He had made a second step to success. Morgan stood firmly on the mainland. But the Spaniards had been warned. A buccaneer had deserted and betrayed Morgan's plans.

Morgan realized that the town was alarmed and was daily receiving reinforcements. He hastily took arms and ammunition and some 1,200 men, and left 700 men, mostly ill and wounded, with the ships. He did not take any victuals with him, for he hoped to capture Spanish stores on the way.

The adventurer took five small sailing vessels and thirty-two boats, and the following morning he began the memorable voyage which is the highest peak of buccaneer glory. The doctor, Esquemeling, who took part in it has described it. Here is a brief summary of his account :

' We were packed like herrings in our boats when we set off. We could scarcely move. And yet, apart from our weapons, we had hardly anything else, for all the provisions had been left in San Lorenzo. For five days we rested in Tabernillas. In the morning we were wakened by our empty rumbling stomachs, which soon got us up. But now on the sixth day we could hardly march on. Our halts became more frequent. Discontent and grumbling grew louder. We ate leaves and grass. Towards the afternoon we came to a plantation, where a few lucky ones found a barn full of maize. We fell upon the maize and ate it raw and carried it away in bushels. A few seconds later we suddenly noticed some hundred Indians on the opposite bank who were hurrying away with lightning speed.

'"*Hà perros! A la savanna, a la savanna!*" they shouted, and soon they were no longer to be seen.

'We gave up the pursuit, for we would have had to get across to the other bank. We were too exhausted to do this, and remained lying where we were for the rest of the day.

'The meeting with the Indians was a sign that something was going to happen. The following morning, therefore, we cleaned our weapons and tried our muskets and pistols. Then we crossed the river and could soon see smoke rising over the tree-tops in the distance. What a joy that was! We took fresh courage. The men shouted with delight and jumped about like madmen. And some joked that the Spaniards were already roasting a joint to welcome us. We soon reached the place. It was Venta Cruces. But alas! the smoke we had seen was Venta Cruces itself. The whole place was in flames.

'The following morning we all gathered. There were eleven hundred men fit for action, the rest were ill and exhausted.

'Then we marched to Panama along a road which was so narrow that ten men could hardly walk along it side by side.

'At Quesada the road lay between two high rocks. Suddenly a hail of arrows fell in our midst. We wheeled round immediately, but could see nothing but stones and thicket. And then we noticed Indians running towards us and others on the rocks. We shot wildly at them. Many were killed, the rest disappeared. Soon after we saw them again and fired at them. And so on until we came out of the wood on to a prairie. There we saw them running from bush to bush and from mound to mound.

'" *A la savanna! A la savanna! Cornudos perros Ingleses!*" they cried.

'This skirmish cost us eight dead and ten wounded.

'Towards evening it began to rain—we looked for houses where we might protect our weapons, but they had all been burnt down. We camped outside in the wet and the cold. It was eight days since we had had food or drink.

'Then we marched for two hours over terrible country. We noticed the Indians, now before us, now behind us. About midday we reached the top of a high mountain, and our hearts beat fast when we saw the sea before us. But our hearts beat still faster when we came down into the valley, which was swarming with horses, oxen and mules. We halted. Some made fires, while others who were experienced buccaneers fell upon the animals and killed what came their way. Soon we were sitting round the fire and had the first good meal after nine days.

'Suddenly the alarm was given, but it proved to be a false one. All the same we set off on the march again. We reached a small hill from which we saw the cathedral tower of Panama in the distance.

'We threw our hats up in the air. We ran and jumped about like madmen. We were near our goal.

'But a battle was still to be fought. And soon its heralds appeared. We suddenly noticed some fifty riders who had come out of the town as a result of our noise. They neared us until they were within firing distance, then they halted and threatened us.

'*Mañana, mañana, perros! Nos veremos!*'

'A little later they rode back again, leaving only a few men for observation.

'Shortly after, their guns boomed out in the town. They opened fire on us, which, however, did not do us any harm, for we were well protected.

'Also about two hundred Spaniards appeared behind us and barricaded all our ways, we were to be besieged. But we were not in the least disturbed and slept peacefully through the night. We were up with the sun. We heard the réveillé in Panama.

‘ All round us Spaniards were watching us.

‘ We set off on our march, not along the main road where they were expecting us, but to the left of it through a small wood. It was a devilishly bad way—two hours through dense vegetation and morass—until we came out on to a mound. Then we opened our eyes wide. Before us lay golden Panama with its walls, turrets, cathedral, palaces and gates, and in the open fields beyond (what a prospect !) the whole of the Spanish forces : two squadrons, four regiments of infantry, and another corps at the side and masses of Indians, negroes, dogs and oxen.

‘ Flight was out of the question. Here we were either to conquer or to die.

‘ Captain Morgan divided us into three battalions and sent twenty good guns in advance to open fire.

‘ We could see the Spanish cavalry from our height as it approached us with drawn swords and waving their lances. With a threefold “ *Viva el rey !* ” they spurred their horses on. But the attack did not go as well as they expected. The ground was marshy and full of holes, the horses stumbled and our guns kept up an uninterrupted fire.

‘ Meanwhile the infantry came into action. Then came the great moment. The Spaniards drove all their animals against us. But we were ready for them, and many a bull died a hero's death.

‘ This battle lasted for nearly two hours. Then the Spanish fire slackened. One man after another disappeared behind a hill which lay somewhat to the side. They seemed to have exhausted their ammunition. Soon the retreat was general.

‘ And we ? We could not follow them for we were too limp and weak after all this terrible exertion. We remained where we were.

‘ After a rest we went on. We wanted to surround the town and to enter from that side where the road leads from Porto Bello. We lost many men in our search round the walls, but we managed to penetrate into the town at a place where we found no resistance. But when we were in the town a mighty discharge of grape-shot fell among us, killing and wounding many men.

'Hell raged. Eager for booty the ravenous, bloodthirsty pirates stormed into the houses, sheds and palaces, shooting, beating, killing and demolishing. Resistance was hardly attempted.

'Our first cry was for food.

'And after that we searched for gold and money.

'Suddenly there was a cry of "Fire!"

'The Spaniards had set fire to the town.

'Both buccaneers and Spaniards hurried to put it out. Their efforts were in vain. Outhouses, churches, cloisters, a hospital—everything was burnt down.

'In the evening we had to leave the town. The sentries were the only ones who remained, for Morgan feared that the Spanish soldiers might gather in the field and attempt a surprise attack.

'All night the prairie was alight with the glow from the fire.

'We could not return to the smouldering town before the following afternoon.

'When we searched for treasures in the ruins we found much, especially in wells and cisterns, which were full of jewels and money. But most of the treasure had been carried away. And we soon received confirmation of this. The most valuable things, the King's treasure, the valuables belonging to the church and the convents and monasteries, as well as the monks, nuns and the wives of the richest merchants had been put on to ships and taken to the south. This was discovered by some of the buccaneers whom Captain Morgan had sent on the first day in a Spanish ship to besiege the islands in the Bay of Panama. They captured the boat of this vessel and extorted this confession from the sailors. Meanwhile, the ship in which there was a thousand times more to be got than from the whole of smouldering Panama had disappeared.

'And now the burning mounds were raked through for treasure. Nothing was left unsearched. Even the shreds of brocade that were lying about were burnt, so as to save the gold and silver from the threads. There were daily raids into the surrounding country and the men would return with a number of prisoners, who were submitted to the usual ghastly tortures.

‘ We stayed in Panama for three weeks. Victuals became scarce and there was nothing else to plunder. Captain Morgan then decided to return to Chagres. On the 24th February 1671 we set off with a hundred and seventy-five beasts of burden heavily laden with sacks full of gold, silver and precious stones. We also took with us six hundred prisoners—men, women, children and slaves. Their distress was enough to break any man’s heart. Children screamed, and women wept and fell on their knees before the pirate chief and begged to be left behind, but Morgan remained adamant.

‘ At last we arrived in Venta Cruz. Those of the prisoners who did not produce ransom within three days were to be taken to Jamaica. Many of them were ransomed, but others were put on to the ships together with the booty, and we then sailed along the coast.

‘ We had sailed as far as Barbacoas, and Morgan declared it was now time for each one, according to custom, to swear that he had not purloined any of the booty. We agreed. But the first few men had scarcely given their oaths when the arch-rogue declared that he knew for certain that some of the men had just committed perjury, and that he would have to adopt other measures to make sure of the booty. He therefore proposed that each man should be searched bag and baggage even to their clothes. We were all searched. It is not difficult to imagine the result.

‘ But worse was to follow. We found our comrades most anxiously waiting for us in San Lorenzo.

‘ Morgan ordered the fort to be destroyed, and then he proceeded with the division of the booty.

‘ I do not know who had valued the booty. In any case it was calmly announced to us one day that in accordance with the *chasse-partie* each of us was to receive a share of two hundred pieces of eight.

'It was like a thunderbolt to us. How could it possibly be only two hundred pieces of eight, in other words ten English pounds, in return for such troubles and dangers ?

'We immediately sent a deputation to the captain, but he would have nothing to do with it and declared he would not give anything more. There was terrible excitement, we were ready to hack the pirate chief to pieces.

'And lo ! one morning the bird had secretly flown. The rascal had put out to sea with all his ships and our booty. And four or five ships full of his countrymen followed him.

'And there we sat on a desert island, swindled and forsaken, without provisions or a leader, after having conquered the richest town in the West Indies.'

Morgan's swindle is also evident from other accounts. Richard Brown, the head doctor of the enterprise, valued the booty at £70,000, apart from other rich treasures, out of which the buccaneers had been so badly cheated by receiving only ten pounds. The duped men could not get anything in Jamaica, for Governor Modyford was no better than his colleague. The Spaniards reckoned their total losses at six million pieces of eight.

And the English Government and the rest of Europe ? Modyford and Morgan were invited to come to London to appear before the Cadi—a special court which agreed with Morgan so well that he returned to Jamaica as Lieutenant-Governor, and apart from that he was knighted.

Sir Henry Morgan was the second master-thief and pirate chief whom England had honoured.

But Morgan was not Drake. At the end of his life he sank into depravity in the taverns of Port Royal, intrigued against the governors who were different from his friend Modyford, and encouraged buccaneering, which a man in his position should have suppressed.

He died in August 1688, mourned by no one except by Satan whose outstanding emissary he had been.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DANGEROUS VOYAGE

IT sounds like mockery that some months before Morgan plundered Panama, and after hundreds of years of colonial strife, an agreement was brought about between England and Spain by which England's possessions in the West Indies were made secure. Of course it did not grant liberty of trade in the Spanish colonies, but in case of need English ships were allowed to put in to Spanish harbours.

And now this blow!

'It is impossible for me to describe what Madrid was like on receiving this news,' wrote the English Ambassador to London.

Panama, Spain's treasure-house, plundered by a gang of English freebooters!

The Hidalgos rattled their swords threateningly. Their Government wanted to send 10,000 men at once to the West Indies, but when England assured them that Morgan had acted throughout as a private individual the matter was dropped.

And then, as before, the pirates crowded into Port Royal, the prize market flourished, and the successful buccaneers gambled away or squandered their plunder. To be sure the governors were more cautious. Modyford's successor, Sir Thomas Lynch, confiscated all letters of marque and did not grant any fresh ones. But this was of little consequence, for they went to work either with false documents or without commission.

The freebooters now began to extend their sphere of activity. The West Indies, which had been desolated by plunder, and the flotas which were becoming poorer and poorer, no longer satisfied them. Morgan had already pointed the way to the South Sea, and some of his men, as we have seen, had long wanted to attempt a raid there. Nine years later this idea was fulfilled by one of the wildest voyages that was ever made over the sea.

There are several islands on the Darien coast, where the buccaneers found a good shelter for overhauling their ships and for resting.

On the 3rd of April 1680 seven ships were to be seen riding at anchor near the island which lay farthest east and was once called 'Gold Island'. The largest ship was 150 tons, the smallest 40.

The breakers rolled silently on to the hot beach, where a motley group of men crowded round two speakers under the shade of some palm-trees. There were fair Anglo-Saxons, dark-haired Frenchmen, and Indians wearing bright feathers. It was a shabby crowd. Most of them were half-naked, others wore dirty shirts and trousers with coloured cloths round their heads and waists and wonderful inlaid swords and pistols in their belts. Their faces were burnt and tanned by the West Indian sun, their beards and the hair of their chests hung in strands like seaweed, and their eyes were red from the heat and salt air. The speakers were somewhat more European in their clothes. They wore brightly coloured tunics decorated with gold lace, silver trimming, glistening buttons, high boots, and velvet hats decorated with feathers. They all had the same hang-dog expression, for they were fellows who had stretched out many a Spaniard and were hunted on all the seven seas. Amongst them were old hands at freebooting like Captain John Coxon, who had recently reduced Santa Maria to ashes, Richard Sawkins, 'the bravest, most respectable and most popular of all', Peter Harris, Edmund Cook, and Captain Sharp, a yellow-faced, watery-eyed fox, who had just returned from Porto Bello where he had absconded in the nick of time after a most successful robbery. A few greenhorns were also there, including William Dampier and his friend Lionel Wafer, both of them twenty-eight years of age, and Basil Ringrose, a young doctor from Port Royal. These last three were rare birds among the rest of the bandits. Adventures and experience meant more to them than gold. They liked to remember that which they had seen by recording what happened in journals, which were never over romantic but were sober accounts, to the point and effective. Dampier's accounts were the best of all those given by sailors. He carried his manuscript twice round the world, protecting it from water and weather by keeping it in a piece of bamboo cane. Ringrose is the best authority for this particular voyage, for he was the only one to remain with it to the end and wrote about it in his book, *The Dangerous Voyage and the Bold Assaults of Captains Sharp, Coxon, Sawkins, and Others, Performed in the South Sea.*

The talk at the assembly was about Panama. The Indians offered to be their guides, but a number of buccaneers refused to take part in it, particularly the Frenchmen, for they had had quite enough of it with Morgan's expedition. Then the redskins promised to guide them first to the town of Santa Maria, which lay to the south in the Gulf of Panama on the Santa Maria river not far from the Bay of San Miguel. A great quantity of gold from the Darien mines was shipped from there to Panama. It was therefore quite promising, and if they did not succeed there they could always move on to Panama.

This proposal was accepted.

Two days later 331 men crossed over from Gold Island to the mainland. After landing, they separated into seven divisions, which were distinguishable from each other by different flags. The leaders were Sharp, Sawkins, Cook, Coxon and Harris, the last two being each in command of two divisions.

Thus began the ' Dangerous Voyage ' which Basil Ringrose describes and of which a condensed account is now given :

' We set off in good order. After passing through a small wood we came to a prairie over which we had to pass for a good mile through swamp and grass. A narrow valley led us into the hills on whose slopes old plantations could be seen. We camped that evening on a dry river-bed and built huts for ourselves out of branches of trees and leaves, for it looked like rain. Here we met an Indian, Antonio, who wanted to attach himself to us, but his child was ill and on the point of death. He wanted to wait until the child died and then he would overtake us. He warned us not to lie in the grass as the ground was full of adders. We found traces of gold in the river-bed. Some of our men were so tired after marching that they had to return to the ships.

'There were several showers during the night.

'In the morning we crossed a steep hill to the banks of the river Tuira, which flows into the river Santa Maria. We found water for the first time and took deep draughts, and then continued our march along the bank of the river on paths over steep rocks where we could only scramble in single file. Tired out, we slept that night on the edge of the river.

'The next day we crossed the river several times, and the current was so strong we were often up to our waists in water and had to hold our weapons above our heads. Towards midday we came to an Indian village where the houses were large and clean and covered with palm-leaves. A chieftain came out to us whom we called "Gold Cap" for he wore an elegantly braided head-dress round the middle of which shone a broad gold band. He wore a piece of gold in the shape of a crescent through his nose and heavy gold rings in his ears. His sons and many other men came up, so that there were now some 150 Indians among us.

'The next day we rested and were looked after by the Indians in the best possible way. Then we marched on farther with Captain Sawkins at our head. We came to a number of huts whose inhabitants enjoyed throwing cassava roots to us and endeavoured to count us, but it was obviously difficult as they could not count more than the figure twenty. They took grains of maize and for every passer-by dropped one of the grains into a basket. After we had marched past they seemed to be just as wise as they were before, for they fell to quarrelling about our numbers. We upset one man's basket, who seemed to have collected a great number of grains. We spent the night in three large Indian huts. It was a clear and starry night.

'The next morning when we were ready to proceed the two captains, Coxon and Harris, came to loggerheads and Coxon fired his musket at Harris. If Sharp had not come between them at the last minute there would have been bloodshed. We obtained a number of canoes here but not sufficient for us all. The majority had to go on foot. Sharp, Coxon and Cook with sixty men, to whom I was attached, went in the boats and were very glad, for we had no wish to continue the march through the thicket and in such a heat. In spite of the canoes, however, it was no laughing matter for us, for the river was shallow and dried up. Every few minutes we had to keep getting out of the canoes and go slowly over the sand-banks. There were so many bends and curves that we even had to haul the canoes over long stretches of ground. Stones and logs obstructed our way. We were completely exhausted by the time evening came and we camped anywhere on the river-bank.

'The next day was equally tedious, and during the night a tiger slunk into the camp. We dared not risk shooting for fear of betraying ourselves to the Spaniards.

'After this our progress was better. Nevertheless, we were not without anxiety, for we had neither heard nor seen anything of our other troops for days on end. Some of us suspected the treason of the Indians, who had probably divided us up so as to hand us over separately to the Spaniards. At last we came to the place where the Tuira flows into the Santa Maria river and where the Indians assembled when they marched out against the Spaniards. We halted here and awaited our comrades, and our joy was great when they actually appeared that afternoon.

'The battle was now at hand. We cleaned our weapons and got ready for the next day. Whenever we had come across settlements we had taken boats with us and we now had a considerable number of them. We set off the next morning. Until now the Indians had pushed the canoes forward with long poles, but now they used short oars and paddled as rapidly as possible.

'About midnight we landed half a mile away from Santa Maria at a terribly boggy place where we laid our oars on the mud so as to pass over them to dry land. Even so, we sank in deeply, and, dripping wet, we had to pull ourselves out by hanging on to twigs and branches, which was none too pleasant in the dark. We cut our way quietly through the bush and waited for daylight.

'Towards morning we were awakened by a shot followed by the beating of a drum, the réveillé in Santa Maria. We got up quickly and set off in marching order.

'After a short march through the wood we came out on to open ground and saw " the town ". What a wretched hole! There were a few houses and a chapel and that was all. Each of us gave vent to his disappointment. But the Spaniards had already seen us, and with loud cries they ran into a palisaded fortification and began to fire briskly at us. But our vanguard was soon up to the palisade; they rapidly tore out some of the pales and rushed inside through the gaps. We followed them, shouting loudly, and the Spaniards ran off as quickly as they could.

'The surprise, then, had succeeded! But we soon saw it was no surprise, for our approach had been betrayed and the inhabitants had taken away with them everything of any value and there was no sign of gold. Had we come three days earlier we could have seized three hundredweight of gold. Meanwhile, it had left for Panama. The stores and houses contained nothing of any importance. It was a wretched soldiers' den, where no one lived who had not been ordered there. The only people who gained anything were the Indians who had given us their advice. They followed the fleeing Spaniards into the bush, massacring those who came in their way, until we checked them and made the terrified men our prisoners. Our pockets were empty and we asked ourselves what the next move was to be? There was nothing left for us but Panama, and we chose John Coxon to be our leader. But a number of redskins refused to come with us, for they were angry that they had not been allowed to massacre the Spaniards. We paid them off with knives, scissors and pieces of broken glass. Antonio, Andreas and Bonete del Oro, or " Gold Cap ", and their followers were the only ones who stayed with us. Two days later we set off for the South Sea with thirty-five canoes and a periagua. We took all the Spanish prisoners with us. We had purposely set them free, for we had scarcely enough room in the canoes for ourselves, but they gathered together the oldest canoes, and mended, tarred and caulked them all day and night to get the vessels afloat. Those who could not find boats made rafts out of tree-trunks, and as we set off they were ready too and paddled as fast as they could to keep up with us, for some of their friends, the Indians, had remained behind and were standing on the river-banks waiting for further victims.

'It was my misfortune to be in a very heavy boat, and as there were only five of us in it we were soon left behind by the other lighter and well-manned boats. In the end we completely lost sight of them. We could still hear them for a time and then we were alone for hours. As the tide fell islands of sand rose up around us and we could only find our way with difficulty. We steered for two miles up into a shoal where we had to wait until the tide turned, for it was impossible with such a heavy boat to proceed against the current. As soon as the tide began to turn we rowed on with all our might, but we could not overtake our companions. At ten o'clock in the evening we were so exhausted that we could not go any farther. We stuck an oar into the river sand, tied our canoe to the oar and slept by turns in the boat, which was difficult enough as we could hardly sit in it because it was so narrow. To add to this it poured with rain and we were drenched to the skin.

'No sooner had daylight appeared than we rowed on farther and actually caught up with the other canoes. They were lying by the river-bank close to a large Indian dwelling where they had spent the night. As we were landing they called to us to fill our jars with water as we should not meet with any for six days. We set off at once to a somewhat distant pond. We hurried as quickly as we could, for we had seen that the company was ready to set off again, but when we returned there was not a soul to be seen. All the boats had gone. That's what these wild fellows are like! They don't care a damn for any one!

Those who cannot keep up can stay where they are! We were annoyed and furious, for now we were running a fresh risk of missing the right direction and we rowed after them like galley slaves, but we could hardly move for islands and sand-banks and we were continually grounding. Still, we managed to paddle out safely to the mouth of the river, but we could not get out of it, although we were only a stone's-throw away from the sea.

'The tide was so strong that we had to row to the shore and wait until high tide. And then we set off as quickly as we could and gaily steered to a small island in the gulf of San Miguel where we hoped to spend the night, but our good spirits were soon damped, for our long narrow box had become completely out of hand in the waves. It reared itself up in the air like a wild horse and kicked out at the rear like a stubborn mule. At every moment I thought it would capsize. One large breaker would be enough to fill it and to sink it. We steered it as skilfully as we could through the rough seas to the island and reached it drenched to the skin, to discover that there was no water on the whole of the island. It grew dark, and as usual the rain set in during the evening and it poured all night long, so that not a single stitch of our clothes was left dry. No fire would burn by which we could have warmed ourselves; shivering, we crouched close to each other without shoes or coats, dead tired and unable to sleep because we were so cold and wet. I believe it was the most wretched night in my life. We were absolutely alone in this unknown part of the world, forsaken by God and men, a raging sea before us in the darkness, and high mountains, wild crags and the Spaniards behind us. And here were we in the midst of it all with nothing but this egg-shell of a boat. Cold and wet, we got up the next morning and rowed to the Punta de San Lorenzo, a strip of land which shuts off the bay to the north. Then the dance with the waves began again. Two of us were constantly occupied by bailing out the water, for each heavy sea almost filled the narrow vessel. We rowed close by several islands, and near to one where the breakers were particularly high a heavy sea turned us completely over and we had to swim ashore. The waves threw the boat out after us. We immediately looked for our goods, which we had tied to the inside of the boat. Our weapons were in good condition, for we had wrapped them up well and had smeared the locks of our muskets and pistols with bees-wax. But the bread and drinking water were completely spoilt. We were just thinking of cleaning everything up as well as we could when we saw another boat capsize not far from us. It was thrown against the rocks. We ran to it and found six of the Spaniards from Santa Maria, who had followed us because they were terrified of the Indians. We helped them out of the water and we then sat down together quite peacefully, lit a fire, and roasted the wet meat which we had saved and ate it with great relish. But we had nothing to drink.

'To think that such a misfortune should befall us! The Spaniards told us that the bay was usually as smooth as a millpond.

'We then discussed what we should do, for my fellow-travellers did not want to go a yard farther; they wanted to return to the ships on the north coast. I persuaded them to postpone their return for another day. If we did not meet any one by then I was willing to give in to them. The argument lasted for hours. We had put a Spaniard on guard so as not to be attacked by the Indians. Suddenly he shouted:

'"Indians!"

'We jumped up and saw a redskin running into the bush a short distance away. Two of us ran after him and found seven of the Indians who had set off on the voyage with us and had also landed in a large boat. They pretended they were pleased when they saw us and promised to take us the following day to join the rest of our company. Our joy was great, but they asked us who the other six men were as they did not look like us. I answered frankly:

'"Wankers." That is what the Indians called the Spaniards. They then begged us to let them kill them, but I refused, much to the disappointment of my fellow-travellers, who wanted to show their gratitude to the redskins. When I turned my back on them for a second they made a sign of cutting the throat. On seeing this my Spaniards raised such an outcry that I turned round and was just in time to prevent the massacre. And now I was attacked for having deprived the amiable redskins of their pleasure. I soon settled the matter. I gave the Spaniards our boat, as theirs was completely shattered, and told them to get out of the way as quickly as possible if they did not want to be slaughtered. I only kept one of them as a servant.

'We then continued on our way in the Indians' boat. It was much better than in our block of wood, and after setting off we sailed easily and smoothly over the waves driven by a stiff breeze. Our spirits rose again. The sea was rather choppy near to Punta San Lorenzo and large waves splashed overboard. After that it was calm.

'Evening came and with it the usual rain. It grew pitch dark.

'At about nine o'clock we discovered two dimly burning fires on the opposite shore.

'The Indians were beside themselves with delight.

'"Captain Andreas! Antonio!" they cried and made signs to them, explaining to us that their chief was camping there.

'We steered straight towards the fires and as we cut through the waves we noticed a number of men on the shore. But oh! horror! they had halberds and muskets! They immediately surrounded our boat, dragged it on to the sand and seized us by the collar before we knew where we were. They were Spaniards and we were their prisoners. Our Indians disappeared rapidly into the bush. My companions and I were struck dumb. Every one was howling and yelling around us, and we could see from their faces and behaviour that we had nothing good to expect. I tried in English and French to discover who they were, but no one understood me. I then turned to one who looked more cultured and spoke to him in Latin and learnt that they were Spaniards who had fled with us from Santa Maria. Our men had set them ashore here so that they would not be able to betray the advance on Panama. They dragged me triumphantly to a hut, made of branches and twigs, where I was received by their captain and closely questioned. It was my luck that the Spaniard appeared whom I had saved with the others from the hands of the redskins and had kept as a servant. He told the captain how well I had treated them. When the captain heard this he stood up, fell on my neck and cried:

'"You Englishmen are good fellows!"

'And I had to sit down with him and eat and drink at his table. He granted freedom to me and my fellow-travellers and was also willing to let the Indians go when I pointed them out to him. He invited me to stay the night, but I did not delay any longer. I rejoined my companions, found the Indians, and we all got back into the boat and took leave of the captain. The Spaniards pushed our boat off and we set out for Panama. After all, the Spaniards are good fellows!

'It poured with rain all the time and our journey was not at all pleasant during the wet night. It was a dull morning and we kept a look-out for land. There were only rocks and high breakers, it was an "iron coast" as the sailors say.

'About ten o'clock we saw a canoe shooting rapidly towards us. As it came up to us we recognized some of our men. They had mistaken us in the bad weather for a Spanish periagua and had intended attacking us, at which we all laughed heartily. They brought us to shore, where our whole fleet was lying in a bay hidden behind a rock. They were all greatly delighted, for they had decided we were lost.

'We did not rest for any length of time, but continued our voyage along the coast towards a high hill which stood out of the waters. On approaching it we saw it was an island and learnt from the Indians that the Spaniards had a watch-house up there. We landed to surprise the sentry, which we succeeded in doing. He was a solitary old man who was busy in his banana grove instead of keeping a look-out. He was very astonished when we suddenly greeted him, and told us that the people in Panama had no idea that we were coming. We stayed the night on the island and in the evening captured a barque, which was lying innocently at anchor near to the island. Captain Sharp and Captain Cook went on board the ship with 137 men. I too changed boats and took over the command of a small canoe, which, however, had a pleasanter crew than the fellows who had spoilt the voyage for me until now.

'As we continued along the coast the waters became shallower. We sailed a good mile out from the shore and even then we were drawing only four feet of water. We were fortunate in capturing another prize on our way, which, however, manœuvred so skilfully that she separated us all. We only joined each other again the following day on Chepullo Island, which lay to windward from Panama. On our way there we came across a second barque which, however, escaped and no doubt carried news of us to Panama, so that we could no longer hope to surprise the town. Another periagua fell into our hands, so that now most of us had good ships.

'We rested only a few hours on Chepullo, cleaned our weapons and held a muster of our men. As we had no water Captain Sharp was sent from here to the Pearl Islands to fill our water barrels.

'Towards evening the rest of us put out to sea for Panama. We had taken several Spaniards prisoner in our last prizes, and, for reasons unknown to me, our captains now decided to give up these prisoners to the Indians. The poor wretches were sent back unarmed to the shore and the redskins were told to cut their throats in sight of the pirate fleet. They did not wait to be told twice, but fell on them with arrows and spears. The Spaniards proved they were no cowards. All of them except one fought a way for themselves past the assailants and disappeared into the bush.

'The night on the water was cold and rainy. The coast was invisible. Thirsty and shivering, we rocked in our two periaguas and five large boats and were most anxious to keep our muskets and powder dry.

'As the sun rose we saw beautiful Panama lying before us, not the old town, which Harry Morgan had burnt down, but a new, larger, more magnificent Panama, with eight churches which were being built. We could see the walls of the old town still black with smoke and the tower of the cathedral which had been scarcely damaged. A wide savanna stretched out round the town, broken up by small woods and bushes.

'The island of Perico lay two miles out from the harbour, which was bristling with masts. We saw three large ships weigh anchor and hoist their sails—an armadilla, no doubt, waiting to seize us. They steered straight into us as if they meant to ram us. Those of us who were in the canoes had rowed ahead of the periaguas and met the first Spanish ship, which was coming towards us before the wind at full sail. She came between my canoe and the one commanded by Captain Sawkins and sent a broadside over the boat. Four of Sawkins' men and one of mine fell from their seats, but the Spaniards were to pay dearly for this. We covered them from both sides with such musketry fire that they forgot to return when once they had passed us.

'At the same moment the admiral of the armadilla had come up to us so quickly that we scarcely had time to reload. He thought he would be able to flit past us and give us a broadside like the other vessel. But he did not succeed, for we hit the man at the helm. The ship sailed into the wind, the sails slackened and it could not go on any farther. In a flash we were under his stern and fired as hard as we could. The Spaniards fell over like ninepins, the deck and gallery splintered, the main-brace and main-sheet were shot to pieces. The sails fluttered helplessly in the wind. We had her in our clutches and were determined not to let her go.

'All this was seen by the third Spanish ship, which, as we heard later, was commanded by Captain Peralta. She steered to the admiral's assistance, but Sawkins had already left his boat and had moved over to one of the periaguas, which had come up in the meantime. As Sawkins realized that Peralta was preparing to support the admiral he rowed rapidly towards her and from alongside began a battle of life and death. Two Spaniards had thus to defend themselves. Admiral Don Jacinto de Barahona, who was standing on the quarter-deck of his ship, realized the difficulty of the situation, and signalled with his handkerchief to the third ship that the first ship had given us a broadside and had got away. This ship turned and prepared to sail to his aid. Captain Springer and I then left the admiral alone and rowed towards the other ship, for the Spaniards did not dare to come together. We attacked her so vigorously with our muskets that she gave up the fight. We got the impression that every one on board had either been killed or wounded, for she staggered helplessly out of action.

'It seemed like victory to us, we tossed our caps in the air and shouted " Hurrah ! " and the admiral's and Peralta's ships both replied, " Hurrah ! " We then raced towards the admiral like a pack of hounds and pressed so closely to his stern that we managed to take out the rudder. But her crew fought desperately. Several times we offered them quarter, which Don Jacinto refused. The brave man and his helmsman fell under our fire. The crew offered no further resistance and surrendered. Captain Coxon was the first man to go on board and immediately ordered all our wounded to be taken out of the canoes and brought on board, among them being Captain Harris who had been shot through both legs.

'The rest of us rowed over to Sawkins to support him with his struggle against Peralta. One salvo from us made the Spaniards feel the reinforcement. We ducked down and waited for an answer, but none came. Instead, we saw several fellows behind the mast leap into the air and drop into the water. A powder barrel must have exploded. And then we saw a brave Spaniard, Captain Peralta, leap overboard and rescue his men, the defenders of his ship. But it did not help him, for a second powder barrel blew up on the fore-deck and enveloped the whole vessel in thick smoke. Under cover of this smoke Sawkins made another attempt and boarded the ship with his men. And then this ship was captured.

'We climbed on deck. It was ghastly. Every one was either dead, wounded or burnt. The negroes who served the ship were burnt white and their bones lay bare. I went across to the admiral's ship. The same horrible sights! Out of 86 men there were only 35 left, and these were all wounded. Blood was running in thick streams through the scuppers.

'The battle had lasted from sunrise to midday. We had 18 dead and 22 wounded. Captain Harris and another man died from wounds on the following day.

'After the battle we all steered towards Perico Island where we saw five large ships lying at anchor. The captured Peralta had wanted to restrain us and warned us that the ships were all well manned, but a dying Spaniard lying on deck shouted with his last strength that they were all empty and that they themselves had been the crew over there and had been forced to man the men-of-war. This was evidently his revenge. The ships actually were unarmed and were well laden with sugar, hides, wine, preserves, bars of iron, and flour, all of which we seized. We turned the largest of the ships, the *Santissima Trinidad*, into a hospital ship on to which we took all our wounded. A second ship of 60 tons was put under Captain Cook, and Captain Coxon took the third of 50 tons, and then we burnt the other two.

'For a second time a violent argument arose with Coxon, and some of the men accused him of cowardice. Certainly he had taken little part in the fighting. He was so angry at this that he left us, and, taking seventy other men with him, turned back towards the North Sea along the old route past Santa Maria. Most of the Indians went with him. We chose Captain Sawkins as our commander instead of Coxon, for we were all agreed as to his heroism in action. Captain Sharp, however, was not considered, for he had not taken part in the fight, since he had gone to the Pearl Islands for water.

'We now sailed from Perico to Taboga where there were many important Spaniards living. They had all flown, and we settled ourselves comfortably in their dwellings where our men now were up to all sorts of tricks. They got drunk and in their exuberance set fire to a house. The fire spread and destroyed twelve other buildings. From the coast we could see ships passing in and out of Panama. And every day we jumped into our boats and made prize after prize, among them a ship from Truxillo, which had on board 2,000 casks of wine, 50 barrels of powder and 51,000 pieces of eight. That was a capture! The money was the pay for the Panama garrison, but we felt we had also well earned it. A number of merchants came from Panama, to whom we sold at high prices their own goods which we had seized, and they were quite glad to have them back again. We demanded 200 pieces of eight for every captured negro slave. During this time a boat came from the President of Panama to ask us who we actually were. Captain Sawkins sent the following reply:

'"We have come to support the King of Darien, who is the proper ruler of Panama, and further to procure satisfaction for ourselves. And if it pleases the President he can send each one of us 500 pieces of eight and 1,000 for each of the captains. And he should agree not to torture the Indians any more but to esteem them and regard them as the rightful owners of the country. We would then refrain from all hostilities and peacefully withdraw. Otherwise, we intend to remain and do as much damage as possible."

'Captain Sawkins heard from the merchants that there was a bishop in Panama whom he had once taken prisoner. He sent him two sugar loaves as a greeting and received a golden ring in return.

'Then again a messenger came from the Governor. He had heard that we were English and he asked on what commission we had come as he wanted to present claims for the reparation of damages.

'And Sawkins replied:

'"My men are not all here at present, but when they are all here I shall take the liberty to visit you in Panama and to bring our commission on the ends of our muskets. You can then read it as far as the light of the gunpowder will let you."

'Of course we could not even dream of attacking Panama, for there were far too few of us by now. Besides, we were already suffering from a shortage of victuals. So we sailed over to the island of Otoque where we fell upon the pigs and chickens of the islanders. There I made a sketch of the Bay of Panama, which I believe is more accurate than all the Spanish charts.'

The first part of the 'Dangerous Voyage' did not culminate in the sacking of Panama, for this crowd of men lacked the strong will of a Morgan. There were too many leaders, companies, and men. Perhaps it would have been different if Sawkins had remained their leader, for he was the very man for it, but he was enticed away one day with Sharp to go on a plundering expedition against Puebla Nueva, a place north of Panama, and he never returned. That shook the whole enterprise. Who would take his place? There was Captain Sharp and he was chosen by the majority. The men who opposed his election turned back towards the north coast. There were some 146 buccaneers left, among them Ringrose, Dampier, and Wafer, but these men did not think very much of Sharp. However, they drew up their Articles and formed a fresh plan.

Sawkins had already had the idea of making use of the presence of so many freebotoers in the South Sea for a plundering expedition along the coast of South America and then returning to the West Indies through the Straits of Magellan. Sharp now took up this project and believed that each participator could expect at least one thousand pounds in money and goods. They all agreed.

The voyage was undertaken in two vessels, the *Santissima Trinidad* on which Sharp was the admiral, and a captured barque commanded first by Captain Cook, and later by Captain John Fox as vice-admiral. The most important Spanish prisoners were also taken on the voyage, the brave Peralta among them.

Both sailing vessels put out to sea from the island of Quibo on a rainy afternoon and with a small wind behind them.

A calm set in, the sails hung slack on the yards and there was only the current to drive them on.

At last, after eleven days, they reached land. It was

Barbacoa. And now island upon island emerged out of the ocean: Gorgona, Gallo, Gorgonilla. Almost daily they sighted to the east of them the coast of the mainland.

Then came Plata Island or Silver Island. Here as on Gorgona they trimmed their ships. They saw that if they wanted to sail rapidly forward the *Trinidad* would have to take the barque in tow. Sharp, therefore, had the slow-moving vessel sunk and the crew transferred to his own ship.

Their immediate goal was the rich Arica on which Sharp had set his highest hopes. Here they were to strike the main blow, but the Spaniards had been warned and had crowded the coast with mounted troops. So they sailed to the small Ilo to the north of Arica and plundered it. The entire booty was a few sacks of sugar.

For three weeks there was nothing but sea again.

La Serena was sighted and was to be robbed, but the gain was not much greater than in Arica.

Their spirits fell. They suffered from a shortage of water and food. There were frequent deaths on board, but the inactivity was worst of all. After much searching they managed to find suitable anchorage.

It was Christmas morning. Ringrose with two canoes went ashore to search for water.

What a swarming mass there was on the beach! Seals tumbled about on the sand or dived into the waves. The men could not move for animals and had to beat their way through all manner of slippery monsters that hissed at them.

They found enough fresh water, but when they wanted to return to their boats a stiff north-wester had set in and they could not get away. They waited for hours. The wind turned to a storm. Suddenly they saw the *Trinidad* set sail and sail away. They followed her with anxious eyes. The ship sailed south-west along the coast and was soon out of sight.

Towards evening they tried to follow her and managed to row safely over the breakers, but both canoes were filled to overflowing with the heavy seas and were in danger of managed to drive them out of the entrenchment and chased them into the town where we seized hold of them in the streets. They were soon lying everywhere in large heaps, and we took many prisoners. We had more prisoners than we wanted, for as there were so few of us we did not know how to guard them. Most of the Spaniards got away again and gathered in various parts of the town where they again opened fire. Our position became serious.

'In spite of this we sent a messenger to the fort and summoned them to surrender, but we received no answer. Then we attempted to storm it, but were checked by the firing. We gathered on the roof of a large house and under cover directed an effective musketry fire on to the fort, so that very soon no one there ventured to show his head.

'Still we could not stay there. Fresh groups of the enemy were gathering everywhere and had also received reinforcements from outside. They systematically began to surround us.

'We soon left off attacking the fort and withdrew outside the town and went back to our bandaging centre. We came between cross-firing. There was terrible confusion for a moment. There was firing from all sides. Captain Watling fell. Both quarter-masters were killed and a number of others. Many were wounded and lay there unable to fight.

'That was decisive. It was no use hoping for victory. We could only hope to get ourselves out of the trap. Then we realized how right old Sharp had been and we thought of the dead mestizo. And now we had been led into a bog and we had no leader to get us out of it again. Then every one shouted out to Sharp that he should take over the command. He pretended to be deaf and turned his back on us. We begged him more emphatically. Time was pressing. Sharp was quite calm and declared that we were far too refractory a pack for him. It was some time before he grudgingly assented.

'He then gave quick orders.

'We marched back in as good order as we could, taking most of the wounded with us. But we had to leave our three doctors behind, for while we had been fighting these fellows had been enjoying themselves with Spanish wine. Signalling to them was fruitless.

‘ What a march that was !

‘ We had no food or drink all day, and to add to that there was the heat, smoke and smell of gunpowder ! We were wretched.

‘ The Spaniards followed and shot after us, but as soon as we took up a position against them they took to their heels. Some of their cavalry continued to follow us out on to the savanna and fired at us. We could not defend ourselves, for their muskets had a longer firing range than ours. At last they attempted to surround us and to cut off our retreat, but Sharp knew his business. He led us to the shore where we marched along under cover of the high cliffs. The Spanish horsemen could not harm us here. They rolled large stones down the slopes, but they did not injure us. It was doubly helpful to march by the edge of the water, for in the meantime the drunken doctors had betrayed the signals, which we had agreed upon with the boats. Suddenly, two enormous pillars of smoke rose into the air—the sign that the boats should return to the ship. We would have been lost, but our men by the boats had already seen us and had rightly guessed what had happened. They waited for us and later picked us up.

‘ The Spaniards did not disturb our departure.

‘ Completely worn out, exhausted and beaten, shivering from the exertion, hungry, thirsty, and without any booty we came on board about ten o'clock in the evening, having lost 28 men since we set out.'

The blow was serious enough, for it was quite clear that they could not do anything here. Even Sharp behaved as though he had realized this and continued his course to the north. He ordered an earlier booty of silver to be divided amongst the men to raise their spirits. Each man received 37 pieces of eight, a miserly return for all the hardships. The men were angry and depressed.

The rainy season set in. One night they distinctly heard the breakers, but they could not discover the slightest trace managed to drive them out of the entrenchment and chased them into the town where we seized hold of them in the streets. They were soon lying everywhere in large heaps, and we took many prisoners. We had more prisoners than we wanted, for as there were so few of us we did not know how to guard them. Most of the Spaniards got away again and gathered in various parts of the town where they again opened fire. Our position became serious.

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The rainy season set in. One night they distinctly heard the breakers, but they could not discover the slightest trace of land. Their food was terrible, nothing but pickled goats' flesh and worm-eaten bread. There was a constant shortage of water.

At last, after six weeks, they landed at La Plata Island where matters came to a head. Sharp dropped his mask. The stubborn buccaneer was obdurate, he insisted on returning through the Straits of Magellan despite any possible disaster or terms of agreement. The quarrelling went on for days on end. Finally a company of 47 men, together with Dampier and Wafer, left the rest and turned back past the isthmus towards the north coast. The others, under Sharp and Ringrose, swore loyalty to each other and to go through with the voyage as had been decided.

They sailed south for months on end and there were few events of any importance. It was tedious and dull. They had daily storms and rains and frequent thunderstorms.

Sharp had given up all idea of plundering towns and villages and only lay in wait for ships. They managed to make three good prizes, and the pirates divided among themselves 37,000 pieces of eight and a number of bars of silver. Fourteen days later they seized a packet-boat carrying letters from Panama and after so long a time they once more heard news of Europe, which put them into such a good mood that they had a feast that evening and, as Ringrose says, they were all 'fuddled'. Early the next morning, still feeling the result of their carousal, they sighted their third victim, the *Rosario* from Callao. She had 260 casks of wine and rum on board and 100 bars of silver ore. The pirates made a fatal mistake. They thought the silver ore was lead and threw it overboard except for one bar, which they kept as a memento. Each man received 400 pieces of eight as a share of the booty. This was sufficient to satisfy them.

From now on Ringrose's account changes to nautical observations and sailing manœuvres. We hear of other things only incidentally. There follow days of distress at sea; hunger and lack of water. One of the men was drowned and several died of sickness. They missed Cape Desire, the entrance to the Magellan Straits from the Pacific.

A storm chased them round Cape Horn, and the hurricanes and cold were so violent that very often they did not dare venture on deck.

The weather improved on the east coast and they sailed slowly into milder latitudes. They shouted for joy when the sun shone down on deck again. Then they reached the West Indies.

It was Christmas, and Sharp had the last pig killed for a feast.

Then came the time when they kept a sharp look-out, for if Ringrose's calculations were right land should be sighted any day. The man who sighted it first was to receive a piece of eight from each member of the crew.

At last, after a starlight night and shortly before sunrise, there glimmered ahead a flat strip of land.

It was Barbados Island.

A threefold hurrah rang out on deck. Land! And English land at that! They soon recognized the familiar outlines of Chalky Mount and Spike's Head.

A sloop crossed their course. They called to her, but received no answer.

Sharp knew the reason.

Then a pinnace came out of the roadstead. More signalling. She approached within call. They heard English voices.

'I cannot describe the boundless joy with which we saw our countrymen again,' wrote Ringrose.

However, there was to be a disappointment. Not a single compatriot came on board. They belonged to H.M.S. *Richmond*, which was at anchor near Bridgetown, and was lying in wait for pirates. They heard a few things from them, but nothing pleasant. There was peace in Europe, peace with Spain. That meant the gallows for the buccaneers.

Their countrymen were sufficiently good Englishmen to give them a warning. A price had been set on Sharp's head.

Sharp consoled his men and steered out towards Antigua. Ringrose, Sharp, and a dozen others left the *Santissima* in Antigua and presented the ship to those who had gambled away their money and booty. They, however, sailed off with their booty to England and put in to Dartmouth on the 26th March 1682.

After his return to England Sharp was tried for piracy, but ' for lack of evidence ' he was acquitted.

CHAPTER IX

BUCCANEERS AND PIRATES

THE 'Dangerous Voyage' was a turning-point in the history of the buccaneers, for from that time the old hunters and filibusters of Hayti abandoned their customary hunting-grounds and began to chase Spanish ships on all the seven seas. The South Sea in particular was the rallying-ground of the day. Sharp's example encouraged countless imitators who, like the Conquistadors and Elizabethan corsairs, rushed in crowds to the gold seam in the Cordilleras.

William Dampier has left us a description of the magnificence of these voyages. Together with Wafer and others he had left Sharp at Plata Island and under terrible hardships they returned in the rainy season over the isthmus to the east coast. The adventurers were immediately joined by other buccaneers in the West Indies, and after capturing sufficient booty they set off for North America where the settlers were none too inquisitive about their goods, but were glad to get anything at all. In Virginia they fitted out another South Sea expedition with the proceeds of the booty and left Chesapeake Bay on August 23rd 1683.

They were sixty experienced buccaneers, many of them from Sharp's old crew, and among them Dampier, Wafer, and John Cook, who was chosen captain. Others like the quarter-master, Edward Davis, and Ambrose Cowley were new. Dampier, Wafer, and Cowley kept diaries during this voyage which show the glory of the buccaneers at its zenith.

The pirates steered their course past the Cape Verde Islands and the coast of Guinea where they exchanged their ship for a larger and a better prize which they humorously called the *Bachelor's Delight*. They sailed in it to South America, round Cape Horn and up the Chilean coast. Not far from Juan Fernandez another English pirate ship, the

Nicholas, under Captain Eaton, joined them. They put in to Juan Fernandez and then sailed up the Peruvian coast as far as the Galapagos Islands. John Cook died on the way and Edward Davis was chosen captain in his stead. They cruised for a while by the coast of New Spain and captured a few prizes. They quarrelled, however, over the division of the booty and Eaton parted from Davis. He continued to make the Peruvian coast unsafe for some time and then sailed over the South Sea and past the East Indies to England together with Ambrose Cowley, who has left a description of this voyage round the world.

Davis meanwhile was joined by a fresh band of confederates. They were on board the *Cygnet*, under Captain Swan, and it was on this ship that Dampier again met his friend Ringrose, who had immediately set off on another expedition after returning from ' The Dangerous Voyage '. Both ships joined forces and sailed together to Panama Bay, where they hoped to get the greatest amount of booty. And here, as luck would have it, they met no less than three large groups of men, who all wanted to join in Sharp's daring voyage. There were 200 Frenchmen and 80 Englishmen under Captain Grogniet, 180 Englishmen under Captain Townley and almost the same number under the Frenchman Picard, an old comrade of Morgan and L'Olonnais. The Chevalier Raveneau de Lussan was also on Picard's vessel, the only Frenchman to whom we are indebted for a glowing description of his buccaneer adventures.

A few other small groups also joined them, so that in all there were some 1,000 pirates, a force such as Morgan had once had in Panama. But this crowd was not tied to the east coast, for they sailed the South Sea free and unrestrained in ten good ships. Spain looked upon this fresh activity with horror. If the pirate squadron kept together it could devastate the whole of the coast from the north to the south. It was not only Panama that was at stake, but the whole of the Spanish dominion over the South Sea.

The significance of this fact was well understood both by the Dons and the buccaneers. Just at that time the King's treasure was to be transported from Lima to Panama, and on hearing of this corsair gathering the Viceroy gave the silver fleet an escort such as had never yet been considered necessary. It comprised fourteen men-of-war, well furnished with guns, and a crew of 2,500 men. As soon as the buccaneers received news of this fleet's approach they put themselves under Davis's command and decided to give up the tempting plan of plundering Panama. They were content to blockade the town and to wait for the fleet in front of the harbour in the certainty that both the town and the treasure would fall to their lot if they were victorious at sea.

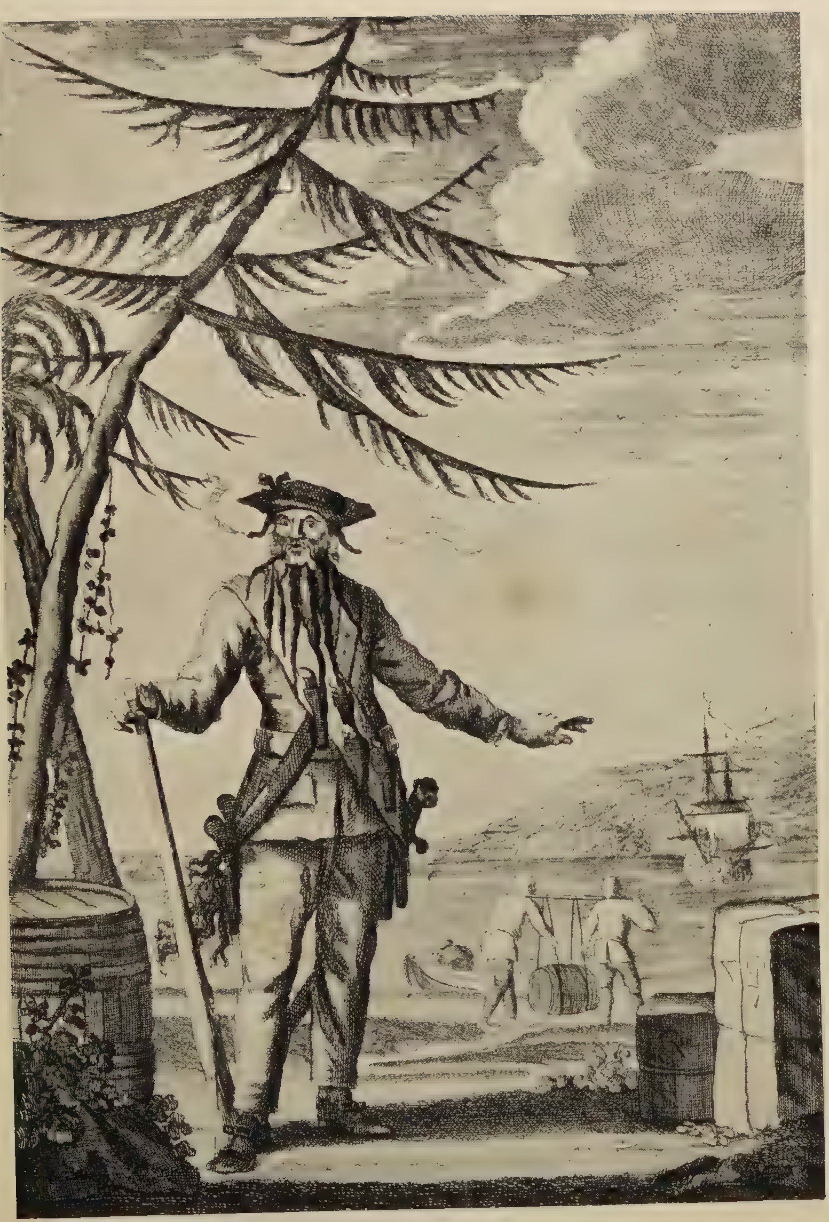
Fate decided against the buccaneers. The Spanish fleet broke through the blockade and reached the harbour of Panama without having been noticed by the pirates. The treasure was delivered to the town and the fleet then took up a position near the Pearl Islands ready for an encounter.

But the matter did not come to a decisive blow. Lack of discipline, the buccaneers' old fault, defeated their best hopes. Davis knew his business and gave the right orders, but they were not carried out. At the decisive moment every one did as he liked. The *Bachelor's Delight* attacked, but neither Grogniet nor Swan could be persuaded to attack the enemy, so that during the first day there was nothing but random artillery firing. The next morning the pirates were lying scattered, while the Spaniards rode at anchor in good order. The pirates sought safety in flight, with Davis bringing up the rear. On the third day the Spanish fleet had disappeared in the direction of Panama. They were by now convinced that the buccaneers would not shake the foundations of the Spanish colonial kingdom.

This was a fatal encounter for the filibusters. If there were any forces dormant in them at all then they should have carried the victory, but despite their spirit of adventure this society was decayed and barren. They lacked implicit obedience to authority and law, which alone would have moulded such a chaotic mass. No sooner had the Spanish admiral turned his back on them than quarrelling broke out among the adventurers. Each blamed the other for having frustrated the victory, and the end of this brilliant squadron, which had so recently been formed, was that it was broken up and the separate divisions set out to continue plundering expeditions in the South Sea. They burned flourishing towns to ashes, plundered and sank magnificent ships, and committed senseless murders and atrocities.

The wild song of the buccaneers dies gradually away. Englishmen disappear from the scene, for their voyages now become voyages of discovery instead of piracy. The Dutch and French buccaneers were the only ones who still carried out plundering expeditions on a large scale, but their adventures were nothing unusual.

The collapse of the filibusters was due to several causes. The most important one was that the colonies began to flourish. As the plantations grew more productive so trade with the home country became more established, and it was soon realized that the buccaneers stood in the way of a successful colonial development. The question was how to get rid of them. It was easier said than done. Who was willing to teach such people how to behave themselves when their leader had been knighted and rewarded with such high honours ? It would have been easy to declare all privateering as piracy, but how could they be certain that the pirates hanged to-day might not have served as first-rate privateering captains to-morrow ? Matters were not as clear as all that. Circumstances were not the same in all the colonies. In Jamaica, for instance, Modyford's and Morgan's energetic successors had soon made order, but in North America the plantations, which had been founded in the seventeenth century along the east coast, suffered too much from the commercialism of the mother country to dispense altogether with the pirates. Smugglers were their most welcome visitors for they supplied them at a much cheaper rate with goods which they could only get from England at exorbitant prices. And the smugglers bought colonial produce for their voyages and they did not pay badly. Also, they were not too strait-laced. If they came on land after months of cruising they were not stingy with their money, but invited a merry company and always paid the bill. Such useful fellows were not to be hanged unless



CAPTAIN EDWARD TEACH, COMMONLY CALLED BLACKBEARD

From an Engraving

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they injured some one. The English Government, on the other hand, had better success with the so-called General Pardon, by which every pirate who gave himself up by a certain date and swore an oath of allegiance was granted the King's pardon. In addition, land and a premium for settlement were often placed at his disposal. This profitable offer, which was repeated from time to time, drew many repentant sinners into the ports and converted them into good citizens. At the same time it gave the colonies a strong reserve of seamen, who could be appointed as the best privateers in time of war. Still, there were many men who remained outside and they were occasionally reinforced by backsliders, who were very obstinate because they expected to be hanged.

In the confusion of this time two famous pirates made their appearance, Captain Blackbeard and Major Bonnet, and they have not been forgotten in America to this day.

Blackbeard's real name was Drummond. He came from Bristol and had originally been an honest seaman, who had made many a good voyage and had distinguished himself everywhere through his courage and skill. It was his misfortune that he ever went to the West Indies, where, like many another honest fellow, he became a buccaneer. He discarded his own good name and called himself Edward Teach or Thatch. As England was at that time at war with France he went to serve under Captain Hornygold on board a corsair and learnt the pirate business so well and so thoroughly that he was soon entrusted with the command of a prize, a French Guinea trader. No doubt Hornygold knew what he was doing, for it was dangerous to have on board a subordinate like Edward Teach, who showed such outstanding abilities in his profession.

The new commander immediately put his enterprise on a sound footing. He filled his French vessel with forty guns and patriotically christened her *Queen Anne's Revenge*. However, it was not quite clear on whom Queen Anne under Teach's aegis wanted to have her revenge, since war with France had in the meantime come to an end. Privateering would now lead to the gallows. But Teach knew exactly what he wanted. There is only one step between a privateering captain and a pirate, and Teach took it without another thought. Since neither Spaniards nor Frenchmen came his way, he developed a preference for his own countrymen, and not far from St. Vincent he boarded a full-rigged ship, the *Great Allen*, plundered her, took her crew on board his own ship and then set fire to her. The *Scarborough*, a man-of-war from the Barbados, attacked him a few days later but could not prevail against him, and after hours of firing had ignominiously to withdraw.

Teach then sailed to Honduras Bay, which was swarming with pirates and smugglers, for he wanted to dispose of the booty. He also wanted to extend his activities and looked round for new comrades. He did not have long to wait, for he met another *Revenge* belonging to a certain Bonnet, who had also sought refuge here after a successful encounter. Both worthies believed they could achieve more by joining forces, so they formed an offensive and defensive alliance against all respectable merchantmen and sailed off to the north, intent on fresh deeds.

On the way Teach discovered that he had caught an odd sort of fish. Bonnet had come originally from the island of the Barbados, where for years he had enjoyed the calling of an esteemed man. He belonged to the best society of the colony, had served with distinction in the army and had retired with the rank of major. Suddenly the respectable major developed extraordinary desires. He bought himself a large sloop and called it the *Revenge*. He fitted it with eight guns and manned it with seventy fellows whom he gathered from the lowest taverns of Bridgetown. And one night he disappeared. He had gone off ‘ on the account ’ and plundered without discrimination everything that smelt like booty. He worked thus for several months on end, especially along the North American coast where he was extraordinarily fortunate. He had no idea of sailing or managing a ship, and was, therefore, entirely dependent on the goodwill of his men, who took advantage of this and refused to obey his orders.

Teach soon understood the sort of man he was dealing with. He amiably drew Bonnet over to his own ship, but at the same time made it quite clear that it was a pity for a man of his education and merits to have to suffer the hardships of a ship's commander, and that now he could supervise the work all the better from his cabin. He gave the command of the sloop over to his friend Richards, who soon settled the refractory crew on the *Revenge*. But from that moment the major was little more than a prisoner.

Then they sailed past the island Grand Cayman and the Bahamas to the coast of South Carolina. They seized three full-rigged ships, two brigantines, five sloops and two pinks. The victims were usually allowed to sail away after having been plundered. Men went over to Teach from most of the vessels, so that as he was approaching the coast of Carolina he was admiral over four good ships, his flagship with forty guns, two sloops, and a tendership on which the booty was stowed away. There were about 140 seamen in all.

We can imagine the agitation in the colony when this company suddenly appeared and cast anchor immediately before the entrance to the harbour of their capital, Charleston. Pirates were nothing out of the ordinary. They sailed in and out, and many a governor had sympathy with them. Many settlers were their friends and cherished hopes of lucrative smuggled goods. But these men looked different.

The alarm became still greater when they discovered who the pirate was. Teach's reputation had gone before him, and if anyone struck fear into their hearts it was Teach, the type of arch-pirate both in appearance and ways.

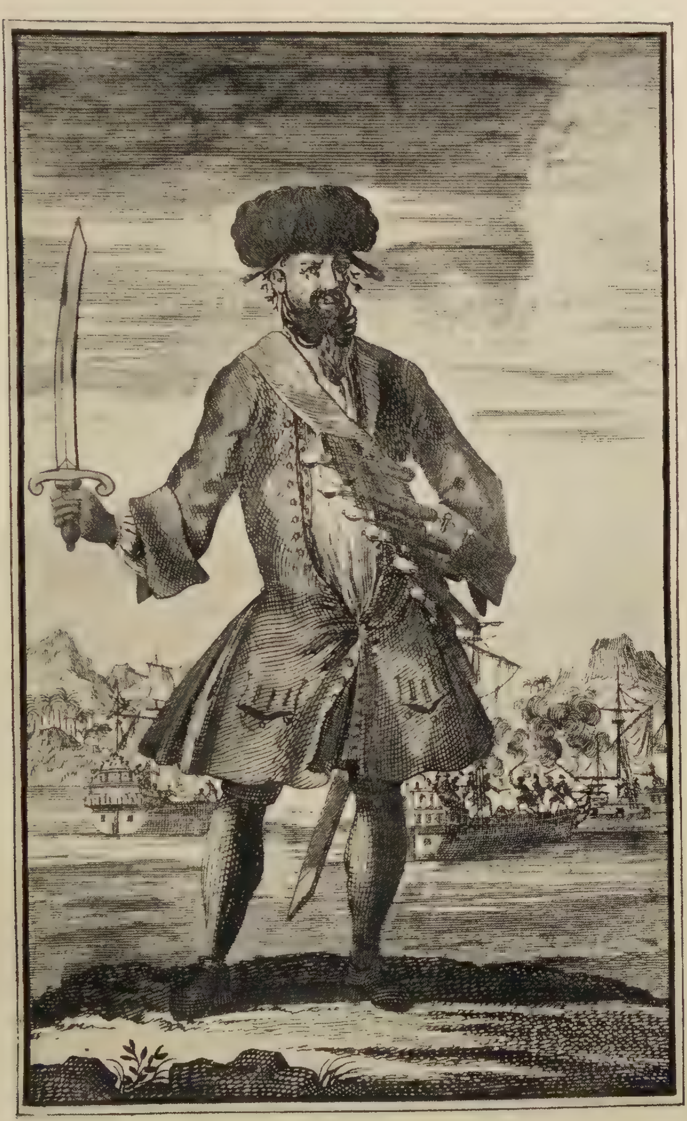
He was usually called Blackbeard, for he had a long black beard, which practically covered his face and flowed over his chest. It was plaited into a number of little plaits tied with bright ribbons. His hair was as pitch-black and luxuriant as his beard and billowed over his shoulders, and his eyebrows were so bushy that he looked more like a gorilla than a man. He was well aware of this and made good use of it. He looked still more sinister when he wore a wide-brimmed dark felt hat under which he used to stick a burning slow-match during an action. The light glowed over his hair and beard and lit up his face as if by hell's fire. Add to this his unusual size and strength, the coarse shirt open at his shaggy chest, a pair of broad sailor trousers, and during a battle a bandolier round his neck, with six pistols, daggers and swords stuck into a strap belt, and we have the ideal picture of a bandit who could not look more demoniac or picturesque.

And he did not belie his looks. There was no humaneness about him, for murder and torture were his daily work. He considered plunder was honest gain, and all who believed in law and order were his deadly enemies. Nor did he deceive himself in any way about the criminality of his deeds. He boasted all the more and prided himself on being a regular devil, so that superstitious people really believed he was the devil incarnate.

Once during a tedious calm when they had not sighted a sail for a long time and life on board was dull, he suddenly appeared on deck staggering slightly from rum and began to be rowdy and ribald with the crew. And since the gallows and the devil always played an important part whenever he had an outburst of feeling, he lit on a wonderful idea.

'Come,' he shouted, 'let's make a hell and see who can stay in it longest!'

Whereupon he staggered down into the hold with two or three other men where they sat down on the ballast stones. He then ordered a few pots to be brought, which he filled to the brim with tow, pitch and sulphur, and after the hatches were closed he set the stuff alight. Immediately a hellish smoke and stench filled the dark place and settled heavily on the men's eyes, filled their lungs, tickled their noses and irritated their throats. It was not very long before the first candidate for hell went up on deck coughing and weeping his eyes out. Half choked and almost unconscious the other men followed him. One man was left sitting unmoved on his stone and breathing the poisonous stuff as though he were in his element. This was Edward Teach. And when the men on deck were growing anxious and afraid that



BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE
From an Engraving by B. Cole

perhaps he had actually gone to hell, he appeared with swollen eyes and a face as yellow and pale as a corpse.

‘ Why, Captain, you look as if you were coming straight from the gallows ! ’ joked one.

‘ My lad,’ answered Teach, ‘ that’s a brilliant idea. The next time we shall play at gallows and see who can swing longest on the string without being throttled ! ’

One day a boat appeared in the harbour with Captain Richards in it—he was Teach’s right-hand man. There were a few other pirates with him, all armed to the teeth, and among them a captured passenger, a Mr. Marks from Charleston. They put in to shore quite innocently and went off to see the Governor, Mr. Johnson.

The matter was as follows :

There was a great shortage of medicaments and bandages in Teach’s squadron. What could be simpler than to procure these in Charleston ? The pirate chief immediately sent off a deputation, with Mr. Marks as spokesman, to lay the request before His Excellency with the express assurance that if he sent the required medicine-chest the prisoners from the captured prizes would be released at once. If he did not do this, or so much as harmed a single hair of his men, then Teach would take the liberty to lay all the prisoners’ heads at His Excellency’s feet.

This impertinence exceeded anything that had ever been known before. Johnson deliberated for an instant whether he should have the strangers hanged at once, but as he looked at their calm faces and heard that they graciously allowed him a few hours for consideration he thought better of it. He was, therefore, very polite and asked the gentlemen to wait a few hours until he had discussed the matter with his council. The high council agreed that in such a case caution was better than bravery. It was ignominious to have to humble himself, but a medicine-chest did not weigh so heavily as the lives of so many citizens, and it was not worth while jeopardizing the whole town for this. They therefore agreed to the request and a chest of medicaments to the value of £400 was given to Richards, who triumphantly carried it down to the boat and then set off.

Blackbeard actually did release all the prisoners, but, of course, not before he had thoroughly plucked them. He took £6,000 from Mr. Wragg alone. He also took their clothes away from them and sent them ashore half naked. He then weighed anchor and sailed to North Carolina, which for some time had been the principal lurking place of the pirates. A long sand-bank stretched out from Cape Fear to Cape Henry through which the sea had formed numerous passages leading to lagoons, which lay behind it. It was terrible water for inexperienced sailors, but it was a good hiding-place for corsairs and they could always slip out of it easily. The country in contrast to South Carolina was in a very questionable condition. Trade and administration had come to a standstill from the outset. The settlers had little opportunity to dispose of their produce and the freebooters were, therefore, welcome guests.

It was here that Teach discovered that the General Pardon of 1670 had just been renewed. Anyone who wanted to procure a pardon could do so by returning the plunder so far as it was still available. Teach decided to give himself up, but he did not want to forfeit his booty.

One day he released his colleague Bonnet by magnaninously placing the *Revenge* at his disposal again. Next, he suggested to Bonnet, without revealing his own intentions, that he too should seek pardon, for which purpose he should go to Bathtown, the capital of North Carolina, and then return to him again to take charge of the ship and his part of the booty. The delighted major did not need to be told twice. But when he returned to Topsail Inlet, where he had last anchored, he found his ship quite safe there, but Teach had sailed off with the whole of the plunder. The major was dumbfounded. He had not only obtained the necessary pardon in Bathtown, but as war had again broken out between England and Spain, he had also obtained a letter of marque with which he was to sail to St. Thomas, there to be equipped by the Governor. He thought he had killed two birds with one stone by getting a pardon for his old sins and a royal permission for new ones. And here he was left with his sloop, with hardly any crew or provisions, the high seas before him on which he did not dare to set out.

After Bonnet had left, Teach sank all his vessels with the exception of the transport ship and had put out to sea with the whole plunder. He wanted to be rid of some twenty men, so he marooned them on a desert island and then landed in Bathtown just after the major had left. Here he probably worked in grand style with bribery and corruption, for he obtained not only the pardon he had wanted, but was also allowed to retain his ship and the entire booty. So far his venture had been amazingly successful and Teach had every intention of spending the rest of his life as a peaceful colonist. He had money to buy himself the finest country seat. This he did and married a young girl of sixteen.

After a year, however, his pirate blood stirred again. Teach was in favour with the Governor of North Carolina, Charles Eden, and his secretary, Tobias Knight. It was they who had obtained the advantageous pardon, and now with their help he equipped an expedition to the Bermudas, which ended with the capture of a well-laden French vessel. The pirate and the Government divided the spoil. After that, however, he refrained from long voyages and applied himself to small plunder along the coast. For months he cruised up and down between the sand-banks and in the mouths of rivers, to all appearances innocently trading but in reality pursuing his old profession. Anything which he liked he calmly took unto himself. No one dared demand payment, for knife-stabs and pistol-shots were his reply. But the sailors he captured did not always have cause to complain. When Teach was in a good mood and slightly tipsy he would give half his goods away and feast the men he had surprised with rum and whisky. Alcohol was his devil. His log book, which was found in his cabin after his death, was full of references to drink.

Meanwhile, the case of Teach had become a scandal. The best settlers suffered from the disgrace that their government favoured a notorious rascal against whom no complaint or expostulation had the slightest effect, and they sought redress through Mr. Spotswood, the Governor of the neighbouring colony of Virginia, who had often helped them before when they had been in distress. He did not fail them this time, for he sent two marine officers, Captain Ellis Brand and Lieutenant Maynard, with two sloops to bring the offender to book.

Teach was lying unawares in the company of a merchant ship, but he was not altogether without news. His friend Eden had heard of Spotswood's intentions and had sent a warning to Teach through his secretary Knight. But Blackbeard frivolously ignored the warning, as such rumours had often proved to be unfounded.

Brand and Maynard, on the other hand, set to work with the greatest care. They had on board a pilot from North Carolina who knew the coasts and haunts of Teach's hunting ground. They stopped all ships with which they caught up and asked them not to betray their approach to the pirates. They also asked all vessels that sailed towards them where they had last sighted Teach and learnt to their delight that he was anchoring unconcerned in Ocrakoke Inlet with a crew of twenty-five men.

One November evening Blackbeard saw both sloops slowly making their way through the passage, and anchor in front of him beyond firing range. He realized that his hour had struck, but he would not allow himself to be disturbed and spent the night in drinking and gluttony.

One of his men is supposed to have said to him :

'Blackbeard, you may have bad luck to-morrow ; does your wife know where you have hidden your money ? '

'Nobody knows that save the devil and I,' replied Teach, 'and whichever of us lives longest shall have it ! '

At dawn both the sloops weighed anchor, hoisted the royal flag, and both sailed and rowed with difficulty towards Teach, for the wind was only moderate.

Within firing range they were shot at by the pirate, who at the same moment cut the anchor rope. That was a stratagem, for Teach had seen that the sloops were drawing more water than his own sailer, and he wanted to be chased ashore in the hope that the enemy would follow him. In that case they would reach the shore before he did and he ould plaster their decks with his eight guns without fearing nything himself, for neither Brand nor Maynard possessed cannon. Teach let his guns thunder out and the officers plied with musketry fire.

Then Blackbeard's ship ran aground and almost simul-neously the sloops stuck fast. Maynard, who was nearest him, saw the danger, immediately cast anchor, and tempted to lighten his vessel. Water barrels, iron tools, llast stones were thrown overboard with the utmost eed and the pumps worked the bilge water out of the ip.

At last the ships were afloat again and Maynard now iled nearer to Teach. At the same moment the pirate sent broadside of grape-shot at him. The result was terrible, enty men were killed or wounded and nine in Brand's op. Moreover, the latter ran aground so violently that e was completely put out of action.

Soon after Teach ran broadsides on to the beach and ere was a possibility of his getting away from there. aynard deliberated for a second, his ship was the only one ill afloat, it was a matter of life or death and he was alone. ould he let the pirate escape ? But his honour was at ake. He protected his crew from the gunfire by sending em below deck and ordered them to wait there ready to ring up with sword and pistol at a given signal. He and e helmsman, who had thrown himself flat on his stomach, mained alone on deck and cleverly manœuvred the vessel wards the pirates.

There was a terrific collision, followed immediately by a ower of hand-grenades of all sorts from the pirates' deck. t it did not have any effect, for there was not a man on ck except Maynard and the helmsman, who were both hind the stern.

Blackbeard rejoiced when he saw there was hardly any-e on deck and he thought most of them had been killed had fled under the hatchways.

‘ Board her, boys ! ’ came the cry, and with a wild yell e band fell on to Maynard's sloop. In the first moment aynard hardly saw what had happened for smoke, but he blew his whistle. His men rushed up on deck and fell upon the surprised pirates.

Blackbeard and Maynard faced each other with pistols and shot almost simultaneously. Maynard escaped the shot, but Blackbeard received one in the face. Blood trickled in a thick stream over his long beard.

But it did not seem to make any difference to him. He threw the pistol down and seized a knife. But his opponent was a good swordsman. There was a terrible duel in which Blackbeard was killed.

Nine of Blackbeard's men were dead and the rest surrendered or leapt overboard and escaped.

When the pirate ship was searched they found a negro in the powder room, who confessed that he had had orders from Teach to blow the vessel up if it was boarded, but two prisoners had prevented him in time.

A number of letters and papers were found in Teach's cabin, which showed that Messieurs Eden and Knight were hand in glove with him, and among these was the last letter from Knight which contained the warning.

That angered both the officers and they determined to teach the colony a lesson. They cut Blackbeard's head off, had it impaled on the bowsprit of Maynard's ship, and sailed with the monstrous galleon straight into Bathtown harbour to the joy of all the good settlers. But the authorities did not show themselves. They had every reason not to, for Maynard and Brand now demanded the cargo from the French prize. This was found in Knight's sheds and was seized.

One might expect that Eden and his men paid with their lives, but far from it. At first there were lengthy questions of jurisdiction to be settled between Spotswood and the North Carolina men, which as usual all came to nothing. Knight was then tried and the decision of the court was that the evidence against him was false and that he had behaved ' as a good and faithful servant ' and was, therefore, pronounced innocent.

Meantime the rest of Blackbeard's crew were brought to the gallows.

Before Teach met his end in Carolina, Nemesis had overtaken his colleague Bonnet in South Carolina.

Bonnet was sitting in Topsail Inlet and wondering how he and his few men without provisions could reach St. Thomas, when he learnt about the twenty men whom Teach had marooned on the desert island. He sent a boat to the island and the abandoned men were all brought back.

They showed their gratitude to their rescuer by coming to an agreement with him and wanting to sail with him to St. Thomas. They would gladly have settled matters first with Teach, for they had heard from a provision boat that he was in the neighbourhood, but when they put in to the place the villain had just sailed away.

Actually the major should have steered his course for St. Thomas, but strange to say he did not do this but suddenly appeared on the coast of Virginia and captured a sloop from which he took 12 tons of pork and 400 pounds of bread, in return for which he gave a couple of tons of rice and an old ship's rope. A few days later he captured a second ship with rum and molasses on board and he plundered it. Ship after ship fell into this pirate's hands until, like Teach in the South, Bonnet interfered with the whole of the trade in the North. And he had amazing luck with his prizes. He rechristened his *Revenge* the *Royal James* in honour of the pretender to the throne, which gave his piracy a political colouring and might perhaps save him from the gallows.

After many months of undisturbed plundering he was faced with the necessity of refitting his ship. He took refuge for this purpose by Cape Fear, a notorious pirates' den, on the North Carolina coast. His repairing work kept him busy no less than two months.

News spread in Charleston that a pirate was riding at anchor near to Cape Fear. Rhett, a stout-hearted, prosperous man, offered to equip at his own expense two ships to go out against the corsairs. Governor Johnson gave his permission. Rhett fitted two sloops, the *Henry* and the *Sea Nymph*, each with eight guns and sixty men. The preparations were hardly finished when Charleston was once more alarmed. A cutter sailed into the harbour and informed that she had been plundered by the famous pirate Charles Vane, and that he was treating a number of other ships which had fallen into his hands in a disgraceful fashion. This induced Rhett to give up the idea of his expedition and to turn first of all against Vane. For a whole week he searched for him along the south coast without finding him. When Rhett realized that Vane was already off and away he reverted to his original purpose and sailed again to the north.

At last they sighted the place where the pirate was reported to be. Suddenly one of Rhett's men noticed two topmasts behind a neck of land slightly upstream. They decided that it must be the pirate. But at the same moment both sloops ran aground. The men worked feverishly to get them afloat again.

Meantime, the pirates were on their guard. Their watch had sighted and reported the sloops as soon as they had passed the bar. But in the darkness it was impossible to see what ships they were. Bonnet therefore ordered two boats to be lowered and filled with armed men, who were to board the ships if they were harmless merchant vessels. The boats rowed over within gunshot, but turned back at once, for they were faced with cannons, muskets and crew, all of which spoke volumes.

All night long Rhett and his men heard noises on the pirate ship. Bonnet was making ready for the fight. It was to be the hardest battle of his life, he was quite certain of that. And in the night he wrote a furious letter to Governor Johnson in which he threatened to plunder and burn all ships from Charleston if he came out of the battle alive. And they were not idle on the sloops. Towards midnight the vessels were afloat. All armed, they were expecting an attack at any moment.

Dawn broke. The Caroliners saw the pirates hoist their sails and heard the anchor chain rattle. A few seconds later the *Royal James* sailed out into the morning sun and moved in full sail and with flying colours towards the mouth of the river.

Bonnet's aim was clear. Since he saw that his assailants were twice as strong as he was, he decided to attempt an engagement at full sail in the hope of reaching the sea where the advantage of his quick sailer would soon be felt. Rhett saw through the plan, weighed anchor and sailed up to him with both ships from the flank to force him towards the shore and if possible to run him aground. The manœuvre was successful. A little later Bonnet ran aground, but the sloops did not fare any better. The *Henry* came within pistol range of the pirate, and the *Sea Nymph*, which had tried to cut across his path, ran aground so far ahead of them that she was outside fighting range.

The battle lasted for nearly six hours, and it was clear that victory would go to the side which would be the first to get afloat with the incoming tide.

The tide turned, but both ships remained fast.

At last towards evening the *Henry* showed slight signs of moving. The crew broke out into a long, echoing ' Hurrah ! '

Everything was in confusion on Bonnet's ship. The rogues had not expected this. In vain they attempted to get their vessel afloat, and when they saw that the *Henry* was afloat they surrounded the pirate chief and demanded immediate surrender.

Bonnet flourished his pistol and swore to kill every man who did not fight to the last breath.

Then the *Henry* began to move forward and suddenly the white flag went up on the pirate ship.

There was a few moments' discussion and then Bonnet surrendered.

Rhett jumped on board the pirates' deck and was not a little surprised to see that the gentleman who held up his hands in the midst of this dirty gang was none other than Major Stede Bonnet, who had obtained the King's free pardon and was long thought to be in St. Thomas.

What followed was the reward of all criminals.

At first it was the turn of the crew, who, willy-nilly, had carried out Bonnet's orders. They all excused themselves by saying they had been forced to take to piracy by the major, but they found a merciless judge in Mr. Nicholas Trott, who directed the proceedings.

Three days later the twenty-nine rogues were hanged on White Point near Charleston and for a long time they hung there ' dancing in the four winds '. Then the corpses were taken down and buried on the shore at low tide.

Bonnet was allowed to enjoy a few more days of life. He had some friends in the town who set about to free him from prison and he actually managed to escape. But a few hours later he was recaptured and brought before Judge Trott, who condemned him to death. Here he lost all control and wrote a plaintive letter to Governor Johnson begging for mercy.

He was so terrified at his execution that he was almost unconscious.

CHAPTER X

THE JOLLY ROGER

THE flag under which the epigones of the buccaneers sailed was called ' The Jolly Roger '.

Its appearance was not so jolly as its name. It had a white skull and cross-bones on a black background and was none too artistic, a crude daub in black and white as simple as possible and as gruesome as possible, and that was all. Some were not content to have only a skull. Captain Quelch of Massachusetts, for instance, used to sail with a flag which had a whole skeleton painted on it, holding an hour-glass in one hand and catching with the other three thick red drops of blood that trickled out of a spear thrust in its chest. Captain Spriggs had painted on his flag a skeleton which brandished its own heart on the end of a spear. But the celebrated freebooter, Captain Roberts, proved himself to be the most ingenious of all in inventing new variations on the same theme. He possessed a number of highly expressionistic Rogers. On one flag a skeleton held a flaming sword in one hand and an enormous glass of punch in the other. Another flag displayed a picture of himself with broadsword in hand and standing on two skulls below which were the letters: A. B. H. and A. M. H. which stood for A Barbadian's Head and A Martinician's Head, for he had a special bone to pick with the inhabitants of these two islands.

The names which the pirates gave their ships were almost as expressive as their flags. The bow and stern were usually decorated with the sinister word *Revenge* or, with more vigorous intensity, *Revenge's Revenge*, for amongst such people everything depended on revenge. Other expressive names were *Defiance*, *Bravo* or *Happy Deliverance*, while others such as *Mayflower*, *Childhood*, *Liberty*, *Morning Star* sounded very poetic, but their innocent titles concealed nothing less than *Sudden Death, Flying Dragon,* and *Snap Dragon.*

These flags and names bore witness to the men and their deeds. Drake, Morgan, and Teach illustrate a gradual scale of deterioration. All three were pirates, but the first was a hero, the last a thief. Drake helped to make a nation powerful and successful, but ' Blackbeard ' was put to death like a dog by his own countrymen. Side by side with the ' Master-thief of terra incognita ' stood the brilliant courtiers of a great Queen. Teach's comrades were called Gentleman Harry, Calico Jack, Long Ben, and others. All of them are important figures in the album of pirates. Many of these outlaws used to cloak their misdeeds behind a convenient theory ; possession is robbery, and as the American freebooter, Bellamy, used to say, ' They call us criminals and yet the only difference between us and them is that they rob the poor under the protection of the law, while we rob the rich by the aid of our wits.'

The old buccaneers practised communism, but only in the small circle of their ' matelotage ', where they formed a community as on Tortuga, and in the end they always submitted to State authority no matter now lax it might be. Then there appeared Utopians who dreamed of a life of idleness, luxury and self-indulgence—a pirate republic in which they could lead an idyllic existence far from detested civilization. One of the men who seriously held this contradictory theory was a Frenchman, Misson. He had joined forces with a runaway Italian monk, Signor Caraccioli, and became captain of a band of corsairs, who made the Atlantic Ocean unsafe for vessels. They did not carry the usual Black Roger on their ship, but a white flag of peace bearing the inscription, ' For God and Liberty '. They never looked upon themselves as pirates, but as men ' who wanted to realize the freedom which God had granted to them '. This freedom meant a form of pacifistic communism, which these two men preached to their crew with bombastic speeches. The fact of the matter was that this piratical Salvation Army captured one prize after another, and after they had stolen enough they attempted to found a

Utopia on Madagascar ' to enjoy the fruits of their labour '. This settlement, which they named Libertatia, was established on a most curious Socialistic basis. Misson was the President over a period of three years; an American, Captain Tew, became the Admiral of their fleet, which consisted of two ships *Childhood* and *Liberty*, and Caraccioli was made the Secretary of State. Private ownership was abolished. They had gathered so much plunder that they could live on it for a time. Slavery was forbidden; drinking and swearing, the two chief vices of seamen, were strictly prohibited. All members of this idyllic community married native women belonging to families in the neighbourhood and hoped to bring up a rising generation of pirates. Caraccioli invented a form of Esperanto, a mixture of English, French, Portuguese and Dutch, so that members of the international community might understand each other. The Utopia prospered so long as the plunder lasted, but as soon as there was a shortage, disputes arose with the natives, who were not willing to share the colonists' lofty conception of property, since they were always the losers. The end of the story was that one day the pacifists were chased out by the negroes, and Misson and a number of others were shipwrecked and drowned.

Intellectuals such as these were, of course, an exception amongst pirates. The majority consisted of born criminals and roughnecks of every description to whom murder and theft came more naturally than work; men who were led astray or press-ganged and were there because they had neither the energy nor the will-power to break away. The gulf between seamen and pirates in those days was none too great. Many well-known seamen had sailed for a time under the ' Jolly Roger ', and it was only by chance that some fell on their feet and others went to the gallows. The pirates banded together and lived in the same way as the buccaneers. Out of a few bold fellows there grew a gang, which was increased with every prize they made. Sometimes they formed a whole squadron, which would then divide up and form fresh alliances and thus a whole circle of pirate enterprises would grow up. The Jolly Roger in this way was an actual society in which the master's craft was handed down to the apprentice. Like the buccaneers they had their own laws, articles and election of officers, which they called ' pistol proof '. It was only their discipline which seemed to be more severe. They often changed their captains from week to week and even in the middle of an action. Hatred of the Spaniards turned the buccaneer into a soldier, who never lost touch with his nation. The man under the Jolly Roger, however, was a genuine thief, an international ragamuffin who had no other hatreds than those of any outlaw. He was fickle and cowardly. He usually only attacked when he was certain of his superiority. If he found stubborn resistance he would fall back. Why buy a bloody victory when it could be had more cheaply on another occasion ?

An account of how in 1686 some of these Jolly Rogermen attacked an East India vessel, the frigate *Bauden*, and how they were repulsed has been given by its supercargo, Richard Salway. Not every vessel that was attacked could get out of the clutches of this gang of thieves. Many a ship, especially those which were badly armed, was boarded and that usually meant hell for the surviving crew. Men flying the Jolly Roger had their own particular methods of dealing with their victims. Before throwing those prisoners overboard who had no ransom to offer they used to tie them together in twos and threes with their hands behind their backs, and sometimes even in larger numbers. The English pirate Cobham went so far as to wrap the entire crew of a prize into a mainsail. The ends of the sail were fastened together and then the living bundle was thrown into the sea. This gruesome bundle was later washed up on the French coast. Many pirates used, on principle, to slaughter all prisoners. The pirate who well knew that the gallows was waiting for him on shore where he would have his neck broken before a thousand onlookers had no reason to be gentle with his victims. Personal hatred against certain nations, ports or captains only made him more bitter. The favourite sport of the pirates after a capture was to thrash their prisoners, make them run the gauntlet, walk the plank, duck them from the mainyard and mutilate their heads and limbs under general jeering and laughter. It is quite natural that once such bloodhounds were caught they could not reckon on any mercy. All nations punished piracy by hanging. The pirate was not the enemy of any particular nation, but he was the *hostis generis humani.*

Pirates caught by the English were usually tried before a Court of Admiralty, which at first sat only in London. Later the Governors or specially appointed judges in the colonies were given similar powers. The procedure was usually only formal and most summary. A man, who, apart from his bloody deeds, was harming the nation at the very roots of its existence—its trade and navigation—could not expect any leniency. Instead, he was sometimes treated with undue severity and had to pay by his death for other people's crimes. The difference between legitimate privateering and open piracy was not quite clear at a time when, to put it crudely, all those nations who wanted colonies were pirates.

The brevity of court proceedings was often the object of sport and mockery among the pirates so long as they were free themselves. A comedy of a mock trial acted by Captain Anstey's crew has come down to us.

One day a gang of pirates grew tired of its dissolute life and as they did not dare to appear anywhere they sent a most humble petition for mercy to His Most August Majesty of England in which they promised to abandon their ' godless and cursed life ' if they were granted pardon. They signed their names to the petition in the form of a so-called round robin—that is, in a circle from which it was impossible to discover the ringleader. Then they gave it to a merchantman from Jamaica who was sailing to England and asked him to bring back the decision on his return to a certain island on the coast of Cuba. While he was on his way the pirates led an epicurean life on the said island by living on the fruits of their plunder, and one day they thought of holding a mock trial.

One of the principal rogues, George Bradley, put on a dirty tarpaulin over his shoulders as a robe, turned a so-called bonnet inside out as a judge's cap, stuck on a large pair of spectacles and climbed on to a tree-trunk as if he were the judge. Meanwhile, public prosecutors, junior barristers, jurymen and beadles gathered round him in equally ridiculous clothes. The accused was dragged in and pulled such a miserable face that the whole court roared with laughter. After a mighty swig out of a bottle of rum the public prosecutor held forth in a comic manner and ended thus :

' And listen, you rogue over there in the prisoner's dock, just open your ears, my friend, you are to be hanged on three grounds. First, because it is illogical for me to be sitting here as judge and there is no one to be hanged ; secondly, because you look like a true gallows bird, and thirdly, because at this moment I feel a mighty hunger coming over me. So, my boy, you must realize that if food is served up to the judge before the sitting is over then it is an old custom for the accused to be hanged. That's the law for you, you dog ! Therefore, beadle, away with him to the gallows ! '

This is how the Jolly Roger men made fun of life, the holiest possession of man. Yet in spite of all these jests there stares out from behind this extempore comedy the grim symbol under which the pirates sailed, the white skull on a black background.

Few pirates died in their beds. Almost all of them came to a violent end ; they either fell in action or were drowned or were killed by natives or in disputes with their own comrades. They died of scurvy, fevers, drink or disease. Many of them who appeared to be reaching the height of their career would suddenly vanish. Most of them, however, were hanged. If Nemesis overtook them on the high seas then short work was made of them. After a brief hearing they were tied to the main-yard from which they would swing for a few days in the wind and were then flung to the sharks. Their larger ships were usually taken to port where to give importance to the matter the pirates would be tried. Some pirate chiefs were even taken round half the world to bring them back for trial in England, because the colonies were afraid of passing judgement on them on account of possible attempts to escape and reprisal measures. They were usually taken to Newgate and the Old Bailey whose walls have guarded generations of pirates.

Their treatment in those prisons was that of the common thief.

After their sentence they were visited by a chaplain, who would attempt to prick their conscience and move them to repentance and confession. Sometimes they were taken to church on the last Sunday, but the following day the same chaplain would appear with the hangman. Each pirate was led in chains to the execution cart where he saw his own coffin standing in readiness. From there they were taken to Wapping where pirates were always executed. A silver oar was carried in front of them and a mob followed them, cracking rude jokes and vulgar jests.

At the execution place the crowd pressed round the gallows and loungers and sadists of all classes, men, women and children, sat in a large circle of chairs or stood at the doors and windows. Men moved among the crowd selling toys, sweets, and broadsheets, which usually described the crime in the form of a ballad. Many songs about the execution of pirates have come down to us, most of them with a sentimental moral ending or a refrain set to the tune of a popular street song. As soon as the execution cart arrived the mob yelled and clapped. The cart would halt at the gallows. The chains were then taken off the condemned man and if he wished he could pray once again with the chaplain.

And then came the great moment. Each gallows bird was allowed to give a farewell speech, which according to his character was either a whining confession or a thundering tirade against the State and its laws. Very often these speeches were replied to by the people and drew retorts from the criminal. Sometimes it was very amusing, for many a delinquent showed genuine humour at the gallows and drew the crowd into the fun. Others, however, arrived more dead than alive and could hardly say a word, trembling from nervousness, and lying half unconscious in the execution cart. Some put themselves into this condition by taking alcohol, the banisher of all cares.

Death was then administered in the usual way, the cord was put round the criminal's neck and the cart drawn away from under him. A chair often served instead of the cart. The man stood on it, and when the cord was round his neck it was then pulled away. Sometimes with exceptionally heavy people, as in the case of the pirate Gow, the rope would break. Proceedings were held up for an instant and then continued.

After a number of hours the body was taken down and buried. Superstitious people, who favoured such things as charms, would search for and take away shreds of clothing, tufts of hair or a piece of the rope. The corpse was often given to doctors for dissection. Important pirates were embalmed in tar and hung up in chains at a busy place on the water's edge, where for years they swung high in the wind to the satisfaction and warning of all seamen.

The wretched end to a pirate's career did not, however, affect the merry life which most of them led. So long as the Jolly Roger kept away from the gallows, life was really jolly. Most of those who were in the prime of life, worthy salts and mariners, did not care a toss about their fate. The seas were wide, their ship a first-rate sailer and their captains were usually the devil's own sons, who had sunk many a vessel. When they caught a really good prize then they were the lords of the universe. For days they would celebrate and carouse. Musicians were always to be found on the East Indian ships and these were made to play for the pirates, and street songs and dancing would rage on deck.

And above all there was drinking. A world without arrack and rum was not to be thought of. Both were their regular passengers. They were the first things searched for on a prize. If out of occasional pity they left some poor ship intact, they always hoisted the barrels of rum out of her. It was never necessary for a captain or quartermaster to give orders for that to be done. Any other booty was divided according to regular shares, but the drink belonged to all of them. It was definitely stated in their articles that every man could drink as much as he wanted. This meant that there was never an end to drinking on some of the boats. They would drink before an action to take courage, and again after an action to celebrate victory. They drank when the captain was elected and the articles set down. They drank if they met other pirates and exchanged greetings and visits.

The devil of drink was always associated with Venus, an idea which novelists and dreamers of all kinds have vigorously pursued. The truth was more prosaic. An article in most agreements forbade women to be taken on board. In any case, there were not many women willing to share the terribly crude life of the sea wolves. Yet cases are known where women sailed with the corsairs for years either as sweethearts or actually as female pirates. The two most famous were Anne Bonny and Mary Read, whose stories now follow.

The principal halting place of the Jolly Roger was the Island of New Providence in the Bahamas and after Tortuga and Port Royal it was the third largest pirate stronghold in the West Indies.

It lay in a particularly favourable position between the Greater Antilles and the coast of North America. Practically the whole of the shipping trade passed through the Florida Channel going on its way to the North American colonies and Europe so that everything here was excellent for piracy, a rich booty, speedy refuge and a quick market. At the beginning of the 17th century, therefore, there crowded thither from all the seven seas smugglers and receivers of stolen goods, who got rid of the plunder. Complaint after complaint reached London about the happenings out here. But it was only in 1718 that the Government decided to take action and sent out a squadron under Captain Woodes Rogers to turn the pirates' nest into a law-abiding colony.

News of this spread rapidly over the ocean and the pirates turned out of all their hiding-places to take up their position for an attack. Amongst them appeared Blackbeard's old masters, Ben Hornygold and Jasper Seager, who called himself Edward England on account of his country; clever Howell Davis, the former prize boxer, McCarthy, Bellamy, and sinister Charles Vane; John Haman, who used to chase the Spaniards like a weasel and always came out of it successfully so that people said, 'There goes John Haman, catch him if you can!' and John Lewis, who once in a desperate fight tore out a handful of hair and threw it into the sea saying, 'Here, Satan, take this for the time being and help me out of this fix!' Augur, Cunningham, Rackham, Burgess, and many other ragged fellows and Jolly Rogermen.

The taverns were soon full of talkers. Pardon had been granted, ought they not to accept it and hand over their main strongholds? Then farewell to liberty! The daring falcons would become pet birds. Or should they offer resistance? That meant war to the knife, for the commander of the approaching squadron was not a man to be trifled with. The issue was finally decided by the Welshman, William Jennings, an esteemed pirate who favoured submission. Matters were never as bad as they seemed, they could always sign their names and then on some suitable occasion calmly hoist the Jolly Roger again.

And as Woodes Rogers and his ships sailed into the harbour on the 20th July 1718 he saw, to his astonishment, a crowd of respectably flagged Vikings. A salute from the cannons greeted him. It all looked very festive and pleasant. There was only one sloop that behaved uncivilly. Flying the death's head and at full sail she rushed past the admiral, and before he knew what was happening sent a broadside over his deck and vanished. But that was the only discordant note. Rogers put to shore in a neat gig, accompanied by some of his officers, and was given a magnificent reception. On his way to the fort, where he was going to read out the proclamation, he passed through a double row of hundreds of wild fellows from all parts of the globe. Some were dressed like buccaneers in shirt and trousers, others in fantastic uniforms embroidered in gold with feathers on their velvet hats and coloured silk sashes nd their waists. All of them had sabres and muskets aid with silver and ivory. At a word of command they sed their muskets and with a deafening report they fired salute over the admiral's head. They yelled ' Hurrah ! ' d threw their hats in the air.

And Woodes Rogers made order. In a short time this canny pirate haunt became a promising colony. Natur- ly there were backsliders. Some of the rougher fellows oke loose and took up their old profession, but they were ptured and the Governor made an example of them. One y the gallows was erected at New Providence in a busy ace where the former pirates might see how their one- me comrades had come to the rope.

The poor sinners were less shaken than enraged, and eclared that they would never have believed it possible hat men would tie up and hang their comrades like dogs, nd this in the presence of four hundred of their friends.

One of the pirates, John Morris, implored the onlookers o think of the old days and to prevent the execution, and s nobody moved a finger he called them all cowards and raitors.

John Augur, one of the condemned men, was still angrier, nd when the chaplain urged him to think of the next world nd to repent he shouted out :

' Yes, I do repent. I repent that I didn't do double the damage and, above all, that I didn't cut the throats of those who have taken us prisoner. I hope you may all swing ! '

The old boxer McCarthy behaved very differently. He went to the gallows in all the glory of his earlier days. His breast was covered with bright ribbons, the insignia of early victories.

' Gentlemen,' he declared as the rope was being put round his neck, ' a good friend once assured me that I should die in my shoes. I now see that the fellow lied ! '

At that he slipped off his shoes and kicked them contemptuously into the gapers' faces.

There was probably also present at this sad drama a man who from the beginning had been the Governor's trusted assistant. His name was Bonny and nothing more would have been known of him had it not been for his wife. Captain Johnson tells us in his book, *The Lives of the Pirates*, who she was and where she came from. She was an illegitimate daughter of an Irish barrister who had emigrated to America with his mistress and Anne. Things improved out there for him and he acquired a fine plantation, but his small daughter developed in a curious way. She did not know whether she was a girl or a boy, for her father had put her into trousers and had foisted her on to his legal wife as being the son of a relative until one day the truth leaked out. Anne put on girl's clothes in America, but she retained the boyish temperament to which she had grown accustomed.

Extravagant rumours spread about her. Amongst others they said that as she was busy one day with the housekeeping for her father 'she flew into a passion with an English servant and stabbed her there and then with a knife', that 'a young man who wanted to come a little too near to her was so horribly bitten by her that he lay ill for a long time as a result.' Since her father was a very respected man and she was a good-looking girl, she was looked upon as a good match and she had many suitors. But she did not care for the respectable farmers' sons who approached her with the best intentions; she took more pleasure in going about with the seamen in the harbour. Her idea was a real Jack Tar, big-boned, foul-mouthed and reeking of gin. And before very long she met him. The good Bonny fell in love with her, got her consent and before her father knew anything about it ran away with her to New Providence.

Anne was in her element there. Such a life suited her. The whole day long she was either on the sea or on the beach among the wild companions who had been washed up together from all corners of the earth. She heard about many a bold trick, saw plenty of hidden treasure and learnt everything there was to be learnt from Blackbeard to simple William Lucy, who refused a glass of wine at the gallows because 'water is a more seemly drink on such an occasion'. Yes, that was what she wanted! To fly over the seas as a buccaneer and fish gold and treasure out of the waves! But there was little opportunity for that at present. Woodes Rogers was at the head of affairs and her husband Bonny was anything but an adventurer. He was an honest lamb of the Government and did what others told him.

One day the right man came along. He was called John Rackham, or by his nickname ' Calico Jack ', because he used to wear cotton clothes. He was none other than the impudent rogue who on Woodes Rogers arrival had given him to understand with a round of shot that the Jolly Roger did not look upon the game as lost and had then sailed away. At that time he had gone on a long voyage with Charles Vane, another well-known pirate, and they had plundered all the way up to Charleston. Later on they separated, Vane to find the gallows somewhere or other, and Rackham to return to Providence with a ship full of booty to seek the pardon he had previously scorned.

He was a man after Anne's heart, fresh from the sea, his pockets full of money, young, impudent and conceited. And it was not very long before Anne was an unfaithful wife. This was a scandal even in New Providence. A woman with two husbands was against the commandments of God and the laws of society. There was much gossip, thrashing and blows. The Governor had to interfere and as the couple refused to separate there was nothing left for them but to fly.

They found friends to join them, but they needed a ship, for by accepting the pardon Calico Jack had lost his own. So they had to steal one, but whose were they to steal ?

John Haman's sloop lay idle in the harbour, the fastest boat of the whole colony. Haman did not trouble himself much about it, for he now lived quietly with his family. This was the vessel they could use.

Anne became the spy, for old Haman rather liked her. She knew when he went on board and always went even when he was not on board. She became an expert in everything, masts, sails, rigging and how the ship was anchored. She discovered that there were only two men on board to keep the watch, she found out where they slept and when they went to sleep and that Haman never spent a night on board.

And one dark wet night the absconders—Anne, Rackham, and eight companions—set out with daggers and pistols and rowed out quietly to the sloop where everything was silent and the watch asleep. Anne was the first on board, ran quickly to the cabin, roughly wakened the men and pointed a pistol at them. In the meantime Rackham and the others weighed anchor.

The vessel drifted slowly away. On passing the harbour watch they were challenged :

' Broken cable,' was their reply ; ' no anchor on board.'

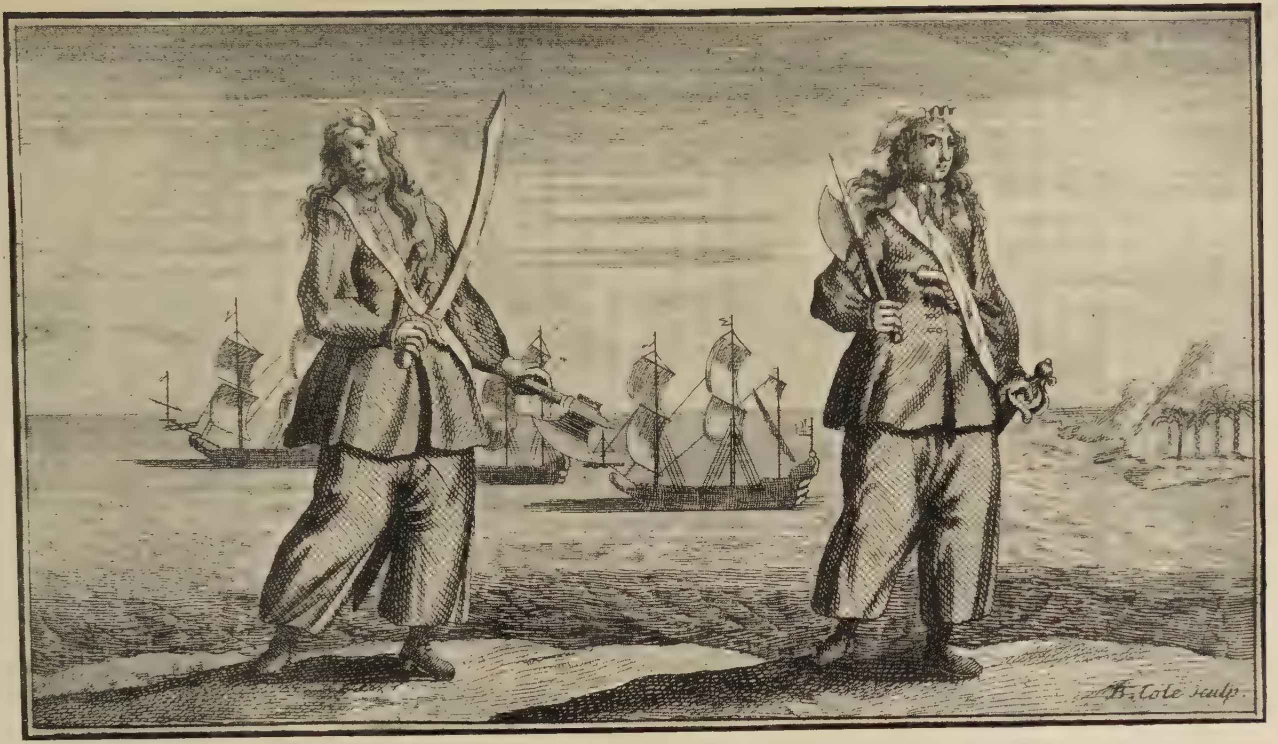
And thereupon they hoisted a small sail, but farther out they hoisted all sails, and allowed the prisoners to go back in a boat, while they sailed rapidly out to sea.

As the sun rose the next day, New Providence was left far behind.

They steered their ship towards Jamaica and set to and plundered there most vigorously, but it was nothing very wonderful. There were only a few fishing smacks and coastal traders from whom they took their catch and nets. Now and then they molested settlements and stole cattle and provisions. All of it was of no value to a pirate like Calico Jack who had accomplished very different things with Vane. Also he was not the leader, but Anne who now felt she was a genuine pirate. When they swooped down with full sails on to an unfortunate fishing smack she would stand with flying hair at the helm shouting unnecessary orders and discharging muskets and cannons against the Lilliputians as if she had a man-of-war before her. And woe betide the prisoners ! She would fly at them like a fury, brandishing knife and pistols until even Calico Jack grew uneasy.

A curious change came over him. He became silent and morose and preferred to lie in the cabin, and, like all henpecked husbands, he made the best of it even when his wife's conduct seemed foolish and absurd. He was soon to have worse experiences.

There was a young sailor in the crew, a regular milksop,


B. Cole sculp.

ANNE BONNY AND MARY READ, THE FEMALE PIRATES

From an Engraving by B. Cole

who seemed more suited for a parquet floor in an elegant *salon* than the rough planks of a pirate craft. From the beginning Anne had looked upon him with unconcealed pleasure and had given him unmistakable signs of her partiality. But he went his way and always avoided being alone with her. One day when she revealed her love to him, he stood nervously before her and told her that she had made a mistake for, like her, ' he ' also belonged to the fair sex !

Anne was absolutely dumbfounded. Until then she had believed herself to be unique, and now she was faced with a double.

In her excitement she ran to Rackham, in spite of the fact that the woman had asked her not to reveal anything. However, he met her half-way in the wildest rage, for he had been long jealous and had just discovered that Anne was again with her sweetheart. Quite against his custom he began to bluster, and he swore that at the next opportunity he would cut her lover's throat if she did not leave him alone. Anne let him curse, for she was sure of her ground. As he finished she broke out into a ringing peal of laughter and told him what she had just discovered. Calico Jack was beaten, and retired into his cabin.

This water-lily, which through a curious coincidence, had been washed up by the sea, was called Mary Read and she had almost as adventurous a history behind her as Anne Bonny.

She too was an illegitimate child, the daughter of a sailor's wife, who in his absence had amused herself with others. As Mary's father stayed away she was substituted by her mother for a boy who had died and was foisted upon her grandmother to be kept by her, and, like Anne Bonny, she had always been used to wearing boy's clothing, but, in contrast to Anne, she continued to wear men's clothes. She had been in turn a lackey, a sailor, a soldier, and had taken part in a battle in Flanders. Love played her a shabby trick at Breda. She fell in love with a comrade and disclosed herself to him. They married, to the delight of the whole regiment, and ' many of the officers had the curiosity to be present at the wedding and all of them in a body offered their services to put the household in order '. Then they opened a tavern at Breda, which prospered until suddenly her husband died. Since peace was declared at this time and the soldiers dispersed, Mary Read's business suffered and she had to look round for other means of livelihood. In her distress ' she resolved to put on men's clothes again '. At first she was a soldier in the Dutch Army and then a sailor on a West Indian vessel. One day this vessel fell into the hands of some pirates and so she landed in New Providence, still in disguise, and every one took her to be a man.

There are different versions of how she came to join Rackham, but in any case two Jolly Roger women could now be happy together.

Anne Bonny and Calico Jack prudently kept the secret, for they both knew that the devil would be let loose on board if the truth once leaked out, and Mary did everything to make it easy for them. Like a well-seasoned Jack Tar she reefed the sails and did duty at the helm and anchor, and was always bright and cheerful. And when it came to battle there was none so ' resolute and ready ' as she.

But the devil succeeded in getting on board in the shape of a young carpenter, who had been pressed into the service of the pirates, and, against her will, turned poor Mary's head so that ' she could rest neither day nor night '.

For a long time she crept round him and did not know what she should do, for if she revealed her sex to him she did not know whether he would betray her. And then she would have the whole crowd round her neck, yes, and Rackham would probably maroon her on the first island. However, she knew what to do. She saw that her friend was only with the gang under compulsion. This gave her a chance of getting into his favour by simulating the same feelings. And when she first won his confidence and no longer feared any treachery she gave him one day an unexpectedly alluring glance, which made the silly fellow radiantly happy. In an instant he was transformed. The admirer became a violent lover, who soon demanded surrender.

And Mary proved to him how seriously she was in love.

One day her friend quarrelled with a mate and the matter was to be settled by a duel. The thought of it made the usually courageous woman extremely anxious. It was not that she encouraged her lover to withdraw from the duel, but she feared he might be the loser, for his opponent was as strong as a bear, and if his shot fell short—and he was only a workman—then the result would be disastrous. In her distress Mary Read behaved like a heroine. She provoked his opponent until he threw her some coarse words, at which she challenged him and insisted upon fighting him. He went about the matter stupidly and she shot him dead. At least that is what is recorded.

The gratitude of her lover knew no bounds. They were betrothed, and two weeks of idyllic honeymooning followed. But a storm blew over their sea of bliss.

Rackham, or rather Anne Bonny, still plundered exclusively in the waters round Jamaica, so that the Governor of this island had sufficient time and opportunity to keep them under observation. And as he knew approximately where they were to be found he sent out a corvette against them under Captain Barnett.

At that time the pirates were at Cape Negril at the extreme west of the island and had just captured a sloop and her entire crew had joined forces with them. This gave them excellent entertainment, for the prize was loaded with delicious Jamaica rum.

Just at the height of their rejoicing a sail suddenly appeared from behind the foreland, shining brightly and flying at the stern the flag of Old England.

There was no mistaking it, it was a man-of-war.

A couple of steady young fellows were sober at once, slipped anchor and hoisted the sails.

But the majority gave a stupid howl and did not seem to grasp the seriousness of the situation. In vain Rackham tried to make himself heard, they laughed him to scorn and were up to all sorts of tricks with the weapons that the sober ones had pressed into their hands. Some went on carousing and drank ' to the man-of-war over there '.

Meanwhile, the two women raised an outcry against the slackness and the stupidity of the men, and helped to train the guns and to bring up bullets and powder on deck.

Then the first greeting shot across their deck and in an instant all the tipplers vanished below, especially the newly hatched pirates from the prize, who considered the whole affair as a huge joke.

The corvette drew rapidly nearer. All the manœuvres of the pirates failed. Shot after shot swept over them until their firing was entirely silenced, for the sober men had enough to do at the sails and the helm.

Barnett soon lay alongside them and boarded without much opposition. There was scarcely anyone left on deck, only the two Amazons screamed and fired wildly into the air.

That was the end of Rackham's pirate luck.

They were all sentenced to death, including the novices who had not enjoyed more than two drunken hours on board the Jolly Roger.

After the judge had interrogated Anne Bonny and Mary Read, no one was more astonished to hear that their sentence was to be postponed than the two pernicious fellows who eventually acknowledged that they were their husbands. It was postponed on account of their weaker sex and because they were both pregnant.

They asked Mary Read who her lover was. She refused to name him, but declared he was an honourable man, who had nothing in common with the pirates and that ' they had both decided to stop this pirate life at the first opportunity and to begin an honest trade '. Her friend was acquitted because he had been pressed into the service of the pirates.

But Rackham was hanged.

On the day of his execution Anne Bonny was allowed to visit him. When she saw the gloomy man lying half unconscious on straw amongst other condemned persons she was seized with fury.

'You cowardly brutes!' she yelled. 'If you had only fought like men you wouldn't have needed to lie here and be hanged like dogs!'

Anne's fate is not known, but Mary Read died in prison.

CHAPTER XI

LONG BEN

AT the time when the Jolly Roger was flying over all the seas, Spain, who had once been so flourishing both on the high seas and in her colonies, had long since become like a resigned old Señora, who can only forget the present by dwelling on past glories. The Contratacion continued to send its flotas to the West Indies, but every one knew that their cargoes came either from England or Flanders. Spain jealously preserved her trade monopoly, but smuggling flourished in Spanish America more than anywhere else. This was not surprising, for the Invincible Armada had long become a legend. The Dons had given up competing with the English in ship-building, and if they ever wanted to strike a blow at the pirates or smugglers they would go across to their old enemy on the Thames and plaintively borrow a couple of ships with which they would temporarily make order.

Thus it happened that in the year 1694 some English merchants in Bristol equipped two vessels for the Spanish Government. They were the *James* and the *Charles II*, and they were sent out to Coruña where they were to await the orders of their Spanish employers.

Captain Gibson, a gallant old seaman, was the commander on the *Charles*. He had one failing, he could never endure a lengthy stay ashore without taking to drink. He had ample opportunity for doing this in Coruña. As soon as both ships arrived there no one troubled themselves about them. They waited months on end for their orders, but as no responsible authority bestirred themselves, it seemed as though they had been completely forgotten. Out of despair Gibson took to his old remedy and quaffed his medicine so zealously in a snug harbour tavern, that each night he was blind drunk and had to be carried back on board, where he would sleep in his hammock until the following afternoon.

His men did the same and at first they were quite pleased to lead such a life. The best privateering expedition for them was one where there was no work and much play. But the play soon came to an end, for the Dons not only forgot to send them orders, but also their wages. Rations became scarce, credit on land stopped and they were faced with boredom. They cursed the Spaniards for their negligent management of affairs and procured some money for themselves through casual work in the harbour. But as they did not receive either money or orders after waiting for eighteen months, they became refractory and cogitated how they could help themselves.

The quarter-master on board the *Charles* was a certain Henry Avery, or ‘ Long Ben ’ as he was known in ocean slang. Like Drake he was a Devonshire man. He was certainly the ablest ‘ hand ’ on board and was a chip of the old pirate block. He was not exactly wicked or deceitful, but whenever there was any trouble he was always there. He had the common sense of a Bellamy and drew a distinction between merchant profit and piracy : you could be esteemed through the first, but through the second you were unjustly hanged. When he offered himself for the Spanish expedition, as this privateering expedition was officially called, he did so because he was tired of working for other people. All his life he had been at sea and had valiantly fought all the whims and violence of the treacherous elements. What was the result ? Empty pockets ! Whereas the men whose fortunes he increased simply remained at home and filled their money bags. He suffered most of all from the enforced leisure at Coruña. He was not the man to stand it for long. He used occasionally to fraternize with the crew ; they liked him, he was different from the other officers, he did not hold himself aloof, but cracked jokes, and swore with them. It was not long, therefore, before he had some thirty or forty stalwart fellows of the crew on his side who wanted to change matters.

This was their plan. On a certain evening when Gibson, as usual, would be on shore quenching his thirst, two of the accomplices were to row over to the *James* and ask them a previously arranged question which would be the password that ' All was clear '. They were then to tell the watch that the crew on the *Charles* intended to abscond. Captain Humphrey of the *James* would then have a boat lowered to send help to his colleague on the *Charles*. This was the plan. Then those who were on Avery's side were to jump into this boat and get away.

Evening came, but as often happens everything went wrong. The old sinner had for once remained on board which they had never expected. Long Ben, therefore, wanted to postpone the affair for with Gibson sober on board it would all end in bloodshed and murder. The captain, however, had taken his usual dose on board with him and was snoring away in his hammock.

Avery gave his orders in a quiet voice. Two of the mutineers rowed over to the *James*. It was dark. They called out loudly to the watch.

' Is our tippling boatswain on your ship ? ' This was the password.

' No, why ? '

' There's something amiss over there, the men want to abscond ! '

These words, which were spoken intentionally loudly, were heard by Captain Humphrey in his cabin, and everything then went as they wanted.

A boat was lowered, and, to Humphrey's astonishment, Avery's men jumped into it, carrying their hammocks and sea-chests. He smelt a rat. He tried to keep them back, he shouted and raged and called for his pistols, but in the twinkling of an eye the deserters had vanished into the night. Meantime, Avery had made full preparations for flight on board the *Charles*. Those who were taken by surprise, pulled faces, but they could not say anything, for as if by magic the mutineers suddenly appeared all armed to the teeth. As soon as the boat arrived from the *James* they had the upper hand.

The rigging was quickly topped, the sails were hoisted and away sailed the corsair over the dark gleaming sea. No one in the harbour had realized what had happened, and there was violent quarrelling on board the *James*. Humphrey was cursing. Suddenly there was a flash of fire, a dull report, and then another, a farewell salute from the crew of the *James*. Lights appeared here and there in the town. Men came out of the taverns and drummed the authorities out. When they discovered from Captain Humphrey what the trouble was about they wanted to set off in pursuit, but no one wanted to venture against the well-armed corsair, nor did the *James*, of whose crew there was scarcely a third of the men left. A Dutch vessel lying at anchor not far off might have been strong enough to do something, but the captain, who was probably tarred with the same brush as the pirates, calmly refused and said that those who had let the pirates go should catch them again.

And thus Long Ben sailed off unmolested

Meanwhile, Captain Gibson was now sufficiently sober to realize that his ship was in full sail.

Dumbfounded he called for Master Avery who came at once.

'What the devil is the matter ?'

'Nothing, Captain.'

'But we're moving, aren't we ?'

'I believe so.'

'Has the cable snapped ?'

'No.'

'Then what sort of weather is it ? I can feel we are moving.'

'Weather ? Why, it's the best weather in the world, Captain.'

'Then what the devil is happening ?'

At this, Long Ben took a chair and sat down familiarly at the captain's side.

'Well, Captain, don't be alarmed. Just you get up and dress yourself. Unfortunately you are yet to learn that you are no longer the captain here, but I am. You must quit this cabin as soon as possible, for I want it. We are off to India where we intend to make our fortune.'

'You damn . . .'

'Don't excite yourself, Captain; everybody on board thinks as I do, and if only you will accommodate yourself there is nothing to be afraid of. You can stay with us if you behave yourself properly and stop drinking, and then I will make you my quarter-master as soon as possible. If you don't like that you have only to say so, in which case we will give you a boat and you can go where you like.'

The captain was so staggered that there was nothing else for him to do but to dress and follow the mutineer up on deck where a slyly grinning crew had gathered.

Harry Avery proceeded in a regular conscientious fashion. He made a thundering tirade against the Spanish traitors, who had looked upon English Jack Tars as fools. How could any sensible person wonder that the men were unable to wait any longer and had taken matters into their own hands? They had determined to collect the money which was owing to them. Any man who had courage and honour in his bones must be on his side. He would lead them all to the place where they would find gold and treasure in plenty. Whoever did not want to join in should calmly say so now, for he did not want to force anyone.

Fourteen or fifteen of the men refused, Captain Gibson amongst them. They were given a leaking boat in which to row ashore. The rest, some eighty-five men, sailed 'on account' as they were men of imagination and did not want to have anything more to do with narrow-minded bourgeois ways. The monarchical *Charles* was rechristened with the romantic name *Fancy*.

The voyage continued, without any unusual incidents, down by the coast of Africa and round the Cape to Madagascar.

Tortuga, Jamaica, Providence, and Madagascar should be mentioned in the same breath, for what the first two were to the buccaneer and the third was to the Jolly Roger, Madagascar was to the pirate world in the 1790's. This island had nominally belonged to the French from the days of Richelieu, but since the first attempts at colonization on the south-east coast near to Fort Dauphin had been ruined no European power had troubled about it. It was like a great No Man's Land to all sailors. It lay like a bewitched land on the route of the East Indian merchants, who were always glad to get past its coasts which were rich in woods and plains, but were uncanny. If a sail came out of one of its bays then the gunners would take the leather caps off the barrels of their guns and prime them with powder, for the Death's Head flag ruled in these parts.

The reign of the filibusters, which until then had encompassed the world was coming to an end, and almost at the same time the Jolly Roger fluttered out from the West. All those who traded in the East Indies and on the Asiatic coast—the English, French, Dutch, and Portuguese—had to pass by it. The island lay across their path. It was neither protected nor controlled by anyone. There was no aspiring colony in its neighbourhood whose pedantic governors might bring bold seamen to task. The nearest was the crumbling rule of the Spaniards in the West Indies. Nature and boundless freedom were to be found here. Men came in gangs from the American coasts. They built their nests as they had done in Tortuga, simple huts in sunny creeks with boats ready to pounce on any likely booty. Every one discarded by the East Indian trade came to them, shipwrecked men, prisoners, deserters of all nations and colour, slaves and native women. The small Mary Island off the east coast of Madagascar became the centre of their activities where an old buccaneer, Adam Baldridge, financed by a New York capitalist, had founded a settlement that supplied this little world with every necessity in return for which the booty was sent to New York.

It was here that Avery careened and provisioned his ship. He cruised round near to the Comoro Islands for a few weeks without capturing any special booty, and then suddenly he struck out towards Bab el Mandeb at the entrance to the Red Sea. This was the usual hunting ground of the sea wolves of the Indian Ocean, for since ancient times this had been the trade route between India and Arabia. Once a year in the month of pilgrimages there were thousands of pilgrims who passed between Surat and Jeddah, the port for Mecca. These people went to pray at the Prophet's

Tomb. The ships carrying them were called the ‘ Mocha Fleet ’, because Mocha was the first port they touched in Arabia. They usually carried a valuable cargo and wealthy passengers, nabobs and rajahs who brought fabulously rich products with them. The poorer people who also made the journey used to have plenty of money for food with them. All this was very promising.

It was for this reason that Harry Avery hankered after the Mocha Fleet.

He met two American privateers on his way, the *Dolphin*, under Captain Want, and the *Portsmouth Adventure*, under Captain Faro, who had the same intentions and willingly joined in with Long Ben. The three men landed together on Perim Island, or Bob's Key as the English sailors called it. There they fell in with three other pirates, Captain Wake of the *Susanna*, Captain Mues of the *Pearl*, and Captain Tew of the *Amity*. They were all furnished with American letters of marque against French vessels, but in reality they all had an eye on the Mocha Fleet and joined up with Avery, who took command over this imposing squadron.

The sea-wolves lay for weeks close by the red-hot coast of the sandy island of Perim. Their eyes were strained towards the empty horizon, but not a single sail came in sight. There was not a sign of life on the sea. Gradually they realized that they could not expect the fleet from Surat, they had missed it and could only reckon on its return journey. To make certain of this they sent a boat to Mocha and this soon returned with the good news that the Fleet had been in port for the last few days and might set sail any day.

They continued to wait. Again a week passed and there was no sign of them.

Then one Sunday morning they made a small prize from whom they heard that they had met twenty-five large ships during the night.

This meant that again the prey had slipped through their fingers. An unpleasant discovery ! Now they would have to chase after them, and they were not prepared for a long chase. They worked feverishly throughout the day making their vessels as seaworthy as possible. Early on the Monday morning they set sail for Surat.

It was a mad chase. Each one wanted to be the first to snap up the choicest bit. The *Dolphin*, the *Susanna* and the *Amity* were soon left behind. Captain Want of the *Dolphin* was determined not to let the prey escape and divided his crew between the *Pearl* and the *Fancy* and then burnt his own ship. Thomas Tew of the *Amity* withdrew completely. Captain Wake of the *Susanna* caught up with them later. The *Portsmouth* and the *Pearl* were sailing well, but the *Fancy* sailed ahead of them all. Avery had according to buccaneer custom removed the upper deck of his ship while he was on Prince's Isle.

Even so the Mocha Fleet must have had a good start. They had been sailing for three days and had not sighted anything. At last, somewhere above Cape Diu, they caught sight of the first ship of the Fleet, a straggler, which, with its 300 tons, was slowly moving before the wind.

They discharged three shots over her deck, whereupon she lay to and without any difficulty they boarded her. The ship belonged to the richest merchant of Surat, Abdul Ghaffar, who was as rich in trade as the East India Company and owned no fewer than twenty-five ships. This vessel was not carrying much, but they found money on board, £60,000 in gold and silver. A good beginning! Not to lose time they towed the ship along with them. for they hoped to overtake the other vessels. They did not sight anything for hours. At last they spied land and gave up all hopes of reaching the Mocha Fleet. They determined to be content with what they had got, to cast anchor and to plunder the ship in peace.

Just then there appeared a sail not too far away. The weather was dull and the horizon was veiled in a thick mist. As she glided along through the mist she looked so huge that they thought she was a man-of-war, and they wondered whether they dared risk an attack. Long Ben decided. He let the half-plundered Indian vessel go free and steered straight out for the new prey. He had scarcely approached her when her guns began to crash out, so that he decided to keep his distance until his escort had caught up with him, for the *Fancy* was far ahead. After a short time the *Pearl* caught up with him and now the battle began in all earnest. Shots from both sides swept over the Indian and after three hours she was so overcome that she hoisted the white flag.

The pirates rowed over to her and when they came alongside they were amazed at the size of the giant, which must have been a good 700 tons. About forty cannons stared out at them and there must have been about 800 people on deck. They read the gold-lettered inscription in Arabic on her stern *Ganj-i-sawai*, the largest ship of Surat, well known to all East Indian merchants as the *Gunsway*, the personal property of the Great Mogul.

The pirates stormed on board her shouting so wildly that the crew and passengers fled screaming below, leaving only the dead and wounded on deck. They let them run and shut the hatches over them. Then they turned to the poop and searched the cabins of the officers and the most important passengers. It did not take them long to discover that they had made an excellent catch. Two of the pirates yelling with delight dragged up on deck several heavy wooden chests in which something was pleasantly jingling and jangling. A couple of blows with an axe and out poured the glittering contents : gold and silver coins, pieces of eight, rupees and dollars, the whole proceeds of a rich Indian cargo, which the *Gunsway* had disposed of in Mocha and Jeddah. The pirates behaved like madmen. They were delighted and skipped about on deck; threw the gold coins up in the air and caught them again laughing wildly. It was a good thing that so far only a few had come on board, otherwise it would have been impossible to keep them in check. As it was, the officers managed to keep the treasure together and to have it transferred to the *Fancy* where the other booty from Abdul Ghaffar's ship was stored. Then they turned towards the hold. Here like a beehive there swarmed a multitude of Indians, poor pilgrims dressed in rags as well as a number of wealthy, distinguished persons wearing magnificent silk garments, multi-coloured silk turbans and many jewels. There were crowds of women with countless silver bangles round their bronzed limbs. All of them were driven on deck like a flock of sheep, the poor with kicks and the rich with sneering compliments. They were thoroughly searched, and everything of any value was taken off them. Their ornaments were torn off their bodies, they had even to give up their silk garments, their shoes studded with precious stones, their turbans and veils. There was no end to the women's cries, and when there was nothing left on them then the torture began. Thumb-screwing, thrashings to make them reveal their hidden treasures, and, finally, an orgy.

At last, when the poor ship was released, the dervishes had no need to envy the nabobs, for at least they had been allowed to keep their rags. Everything, including their clothes, had been taken away from the rich and they strutted about like Adam in Paradise.

The scene on the pirate ship was all the more grand. There they were strutting about in silk trousers, magnificent turbans and red slippers, and they glittered with necklaces, bangles and rings set with large stones. They enjoyed themselves hugely in such finery. The first thing they did was to count up the gold coins. The number surpassed anything previously captured. Perhaps only Drake and Morgan had captured as much. There were 52 lacs of rupees apart from jewels, ornaments and other valuable objects. Long Ben might well be pleased. He had fulfilled his promises. The wages withheld from them in Coruña had been more than squared.

The division of the booty then followed, but it did not go so smoothly. Actually only the *Pearl* and the *Fancy* had taken part in the attack; the *Portsmouth* had only come up after the *Gunsway* had shown the white flag. In spite of this her crew laid claim to a full share of the booty, which was contrary to all custom. Amidst a terrible noise a pirate parliament was held on board the *Fancy*, which lasted all day and refused to recognize the demands of the *Portsmouth* men. Captain Want who was now on the *Portsmouth* was the only one to receive a share, but in return for this he was to remain on board the *Fancy*. His crew, however, made ugly threats and sailed back to Bob's Key to try their luck again. Soon after this a quarrel broke out between the *Pearl* and the *Fancy*. It is true that they had divided up the booty as fairly as was possible with such a crew, but the men on the *Fancy* had proposed to their brothers on the *Pearl* to exchange their ducats for silver. Strange to relate they agreed, but they swindled and cheated the others in the transaction. There was hardly a coin that had not been either scraped or clipped. This was a capital crime, at any rate among comrades. Punishment followed rapidly. Avery's crew, which was superior in number, compelled the sharpers to return the whole of their booty and out of kindness and compassion they allowed them to keep 2,000 pieces of eight for provisions. They ended up by chasing them off their ship with firearms and ropes.

The whole plunder was now, therefore, left with the crew of the *Fancy*, who, together with the men of the *Dolphin*, numbered one hundred and eight, each one of whom, according to the agreement, pocketed between £500 and £1,000.

Harry Avery had the best of it. As captain and ringleader he received a double share and thought he was particularly clever in buying from his men numerous stones, including some large diamonds, which, incidentally, they had stolen.

The corsair then proudly set off, hoisting all sails, and sailed unconcerned down the Indian coast, putting in here and there for provisions until the story of his deeds was noised in all the harbours. He thought it advisable to keep out of the way and to sail towards the south to the freedom of the Indian Ocean.

They did not sail to Madagascar. Why should they provide Baldridge and the New York shopkeepers with their hard-earned winnings? So he sailed straight to New Providence, the land of all knights of the skull and crossbones. Here there were a few wretched huts, some sixty settlers, pirates, castaways, smugglers, and a Governor who perfectly understood how to work in with them.

The *Fancy* put in to shore in April 1696. Long Ben collected forty pieces of eight and four gold pieces from each pirate and handed it over to the head of the colony. In return he assured them an undisturbed stay and sumptuously entertained the whole horde in the Government House. The *Fancy* was dragged up on to the beach, where it soon became derelict. After that the pirate gang dispersed. Many of them squandered their money and in a few months were ready to set out on a fresh voyage. The cleverer ones bought sloops and sailed to North America and became honest Yankees. A few sly dogs, however, drawn magnetically to the execution block, set sail for England. Long Ben was among them.

Perhaps it would have been better for him if he had stayed in Providence. If only he had not got those diamonds! He carried them for a long time in a little bag round his neck and they were as heavy as millstones to him. They had cost him a pretty penny, and as he had not been exactly economical with the rest of his money things were not too bright for him. No one wanted his diamonds, for in this quarter of the globe a good ship's rope or a few hundred pieces of eight were more highly prized. So he followed his friends' example, bought a sloop with most of his remaining money and sailed with twenty others to North America where he hoped to dispose of his diamonds.

He landed in Boston and cautiously represented himself as a Mr. Bridgeman, but he soon realized that he could not give himself airs here—the Yankees were too cunning for him. Where could he go with his treasure? The pirate realized with disgust that roguery on land was far more difficult than piracy at sea, and that it was an infernally difficult business to sell a few diamonds on land. He made a desperate resolution; he would try his luck in England.

People in England had long since got wind of his deeds, for letters and travellers to England had had terrible stories to tell. One day the Mocha Fleet returned to the port of Surat and reported the loss of two ships, one of them the famous *Gunsway*, which had been captured by English pirates. Soon after, the two ships appeared in a pitiful condition with dead and wounded on board, the deck and rigging shot to pieces and all the money, the proceeds of months of work, stolen. The crew and passengers had been barbarously treated and robbed, the women had been ravished.

The Indian Governor of Surat immediately ordered the buildings of the East India Company to be seized, their employees to be fettered and imprisoned, their goods and possessions to be requisitioned. A mob raged in front of the factory and insisted that the foreigners should be put to death. It was only after a few days, when two men-of-war belonging to the company came in to port, that the prisoners were allowed a hearing. They sent protests and letters to the Great Mogul and to nabobs and sidi whom they knew. They vowed they were innocent and promised to do everything they could to catch the pirates. Men-of-war were sent out after Avery. Five hundred pounds was put on his head and a guarantee given that in future every Mocha Fleet would be safeguarded by English convoys. By the time news of the scandal reached England the scandal had already subsided in India.

It is true that people in England recognized the danger of such crimes, but they rather admired than condemned the perpetrators. Long Ben was a devil of a fellow, whose success made every British heart beat fast. One hundred and eighty thousand pounds swept up from the sea ! Moguls and nabobs set upon ! The sanctity of their harems defiled ! Diamonds and pearls gained ! That was more than rascally, it was romantic ! Avery became the hero of the day. The imagination of the people painted his character in dazzling colours, and two famous ballads depict the quarter-master of Bristol as a glorious robber-chief.

While the people in England were all talking enthusiastically about Avery, a certain Mr. Bridgeman arrived in his sloop, the *Sea Flower*, and put in to a lonely port, Dunfanaghy, on the north coast of Ireland. He paid the correct port dues, and then with bag and baggage and some fifteen companions wandered inland until they reached a place called Esquire Rays where the men parted and went their several ways.

CHAPTER XII

CAPTAIN KIDD

THOSE who have read Edgar Allen Poe's *Gold Bug* also know Captain Kidd.

The story of the treasure on Sullivan's Isle, about which Monsieur Legrand received information in such a mysterious way, originated with Kidd. Legrand discovered on a parchment turned yellow with age the indistinct outlines of a Jolly Roger and a kid, and by an ingenious method was able to decipher a secret code which revealed the position of the hidden treasure. He experienced on this deserted spot and in the dead of night all the excitements and disappointments of treasure hunting. His reward was the discovery of an enormous chest full to the brim with gold and jewels.

Actually, Kidd did not possess a hundredth part of this wealth, for he was meanly swindled out of all that he had ever gained. The only necklace which he was able to keep for ever was the one he had from the hangman! Still, there was one treasure he called his own; this was a genuine pirate treasure, perhaps the only one of which authentic evidence exists to-day in a dry inventory amongst the state papers of Great Britain.

Kidd was the son of a minister at Greenock in Scotland, and became a sailor. He cruised in the West Indies and North America at the time when the power of the buccaneers had collapsed and out of the wreckage there had emerged a host of pirates who carried off many an honest Jack Tar. But Robert Kidd would have nothing to do with the Jolly Roger, and held himself aloof as an honest, steady man and was respected as a worthy citizen of New York where he lived with his wife and children. The Government thought well of him and commissioned him for many a privateering expedition, in connexion with which he distinguished himself as a brave and loyal captain, and, on one occasion, he discharged his duties so well that the Council of New York publicly recognized his services by rewarding him with a grant of 150 dollars.

In the year 1695 he sailed to London in his brigantine, the *Antigua*. Just then a new Governor for New York and Massachusetts was being appointed. Richard Coote, Earl of Belmont, an ambitious Irish Peer, seemed to King William III to be eminently suitable for this position.

'My lord,' the King said to him, 'I send you to New York because I need an honourable and fearless man who will create good order there, and I believe you to be such a man.'

But by creating order William III meant nothing less than the suppression of piratical activities, which were disturbing trade and which the governors up till then had rather encouraged than checked.

Belmont wanted to prove himself worthy of this commission. As in the days of Elizabeth, he formed a society of merchant adventurers who would risk their money on a privateering expedition. This time, however, instead of its being against the treasure ships of the flotas it was, by the irony of fate, directed against the cursed pirates. The booty was to be seized from the sea-wolves, but it was by no means to be returned to the rightful owners. It was to find its way into the pockets of Belmont and his partners. This was a brilliant idea of the noble lord, who was thus killing two birds with one stone, for he was executing his commission and filling his purse at one and the same time.

Belmont had hatched this scheme with Mr. Livingstone, a New York merchant, who was a friend of Kidd and who offered himself as the first participator. The excellent connexions of the noble lord encouraged other shareholders of high rank to join them. These were the Lord Chancellor and Keeper of the Seal, the powerful head of the Whig Party Lord Somers, then the First Lord of the Admiralty the Earl of Orford, the Lord High Justice the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Secretary of State the Earl of Romney; in short, practically the whole of the Cabinet. Even the

King himself did not stand aloof, and it was whispered that the whole project had emanated from him. He promised to take shares up to £1,000, but, of course, withdrew his money at the right time. They still lacked a man of action who would turn the thoughts of the most honourable consortorium into deeds. Mr. Livingstone knew of no one whom he could better recommend than his friend honest Captain Kidd, who had had experience in such matters. It is true Kidd resisted a little at first, for he had already feathered his nest and would gladly have gone over to the Philistines. But as they promised him a good portion of the profits, he was only human and consented.

A contract was drawn up. Belmont and his supporters were to defray four-fifths, and Kidd and Livingstone one-fifth of the expenses, which were estimated at £6,000. The crew were to receive a quarter of the booty and the remaining three-quarters were to be divided into five parts, of which Belmont and his friends could lay claim to four parts and Kidd and Livingstone to one. If no pirates were caught, which no one believed possible, then Kidd and Livingstone were to refund the lords their deposit money and in return they were to keep the ship which had yet to be bought and equipped.

Kidd was thus not exactly badly treated. His entire share was to be seven per cent. The last condition was the only difficulty. In the case of a mishap the ship might not cover the losses which he and Livingstone would then have to meet. But Belmont was shrewd enough to know what to do in such a case. He provided his protégé with two magnificent commissions which relieved him of all anxiety, by giving him a letter of marque against pirates and, since the war with France was still raging, one against French ships. Success was in this way assured from two sides. The letter of marque against pirates could be held in secret, for it boasted the Great Seal of His Most Gracious Majesty and began with the King's salutation to his 'trusty and well-beloved Captain Kidd'.

In May 1696 this excellent man sailed for America on the good ship *Adventure*, with 30 guns and 870 men on board.

On the way he captured a harmless French fishing smack and, as it was his bounden duty, he landed with this first prize in New York, since all prizes had to be declared to a prize court in an English port as legal war booty before they could become the property of the captor.

The first thing Kidd had to do in New York was to make up the numbers in his crew, for the captains of the Royal Navy in London had taken the best men from under his very nose. And those who were left were absolute greenhorns. But for his voyage he needed experienced men, who would know the hiding-places and smuggling tracks of the Jolly Roger, and had perhaps even done a little pirating themselves. Kidd had to search for a long time, too long for his impatient employers, who wanted to hear of quick successes and began to urge him on. Consequently he hurried and began to search incautiously. He took on board a crew who were perhaps of a deeper dye than the men against whom they would be used. Like a true buccaneer he made an agreement with them of ' No purchase, no pay '.

And one day, while the River Hudson was still in the grip of winter, he weighed anchor and steered at full sail out to sea. Actually he should have sailed to the West Indies, for the King was much concerned about the American pirates there. But his patrons were far less concerned with the destruction of pirates than the capture of booty, and Kidd felt he could do better business in other places than in the West Indies. Once more he crossed the Atlantic and landed for the first time at Madeira. Then he sailed full sail towards Madagascar.

The chase was to begin here. But Kidd searched round the whole island, and near the Comoro Islands crossed over to the coast of Malabar and back again and did not meet with a single pirate. The good captain realized for the first time that he had got the worst of it with his royal commission. He was short of victuals, his crew were bad-tempered and refractory, and his money was coming to an end. The only thing was that he took a chest of money from a stranded French schooner, and so was able once more to buy food. Moreover, he was faced with bankruptcy. ‘ No purchase, no pay ’ was proving to be the case not only for his men, but still more for himself. Not only would he receive nothing but he would have to pay out a fortune to the lords.

One day he suddenly came to the very place where Avery had lurked on the *Gunsway*, close to Bob's Key, and he too lay in wait here. For whom ? For pirates ? Then he might just as well have sailed away again ; for he could soon convince himself that there were none there. For three weeks he waited and kept a sharp watch always towards the north, where one day the Mocha Fleet was bound to appear. Perhaps he wanted to offer himself as their guardian angel, or to use it as a bait for the pirates who molested the Fleet on its way. He had placed a sentry on the highest point of the island. One evening the man signalled wildly with his flag. Kidd rushed up on deck. The Fleet was there : fifteen ships.

And now something incredible took place. Like a true Jolly Roger man Kidd collected his thievish, grinning crew and addressed them :

‘ Well, my lads, here we are at our goal ! So far we have done nothing and everything has gone badly with us. But we shall make up for it all now and land ourselves one of the best catches of the season.’

A wild yell of approval greeted this frank speech. There was no need for further orders. For such a commander they would go through thick and thin. They set off and the chase began. But Kidd was clever enough not to show his true colours at once. Quite innocently he moved amongst the vessels and for days on end he sailed near them as if he only intended to accompany them. Actually he was biding his time so as to attack a particularly deep-drawing Indian vessel. One day when he was certain of her, he sent her a broadside which fell like a bolt from the sky. But he had made a mistake. The Moors, as the English used to call the ships belonging to coloured peoples, were not defenceless but were escorted by two convoys, one English and one Dutch, who had not made themselves known. They had been watching Kidd for some time with suspicion, and without his realizing it they had placed him between two fires. And as they came up to him he was dumbfounded to see the national colours go up on both ships. Horrified, he let the booty go and set off at full sail.

That was his first appearance as a pirate.

And once on the downward path things soon went from bad to worse.

Kidd sailed towards the coast of Malabar and set to work here in good West Indian style. He plundered, tortured, burnt, and took advantage of the coast brothers by telling them he held a talisman in his pocket which would pull him out of every difficulty and would open the door of every English factory. By this he meant his two splendid commissions. Indeed he only chased vessels belonging to the Moors, much to the disgust of his men, for they could not understand why, when once they had sold their necks, he should hesitate to rob an English or Dutch ship. They soon began to grumble. Moreover, Kidd was not a very pleasant master. He punished severely and often, mostly in person by beating, cuffing, or boxing their ears, and he was an enormously strong man who did not hesitate to fight the strongest bull amongst his men. One day he saw close to Cape Comorin a small schooner, the *Loyal Captain*, riding at anchor. Greedy for loot, he bore down on her, whereupon she hoisted the English flag. Then he lay to, warmly greeted his compatriot, a certain Captain Howe, and in all friendship lay alongside his ship for a number of days.

The crews also fraternized. One day two Dutchmen who were amongst Howe's people came over to the quarters of Kidd's men and were entertained with bumbo, a spicy drink which was a kind of punch. The two of them happened to mention that they had a rich Armenian on board, whose coffers were bulging with precious stones. That was good news for the thieves on board the *Adventure*. They winked knowingly at the Dutchmen and soon came to an understanding with them. When Howe next came to visit Kidd they would send a boat over to the *Loyal Captain*. The Dutchmen would load it with all the Armenian's treasure and many another valuable besides and then they would go over bag and baggage to Kidd. All this was to be done quietly.

The scheme was good. But what would Kidd have to say about it ? In considering this question the argument must have become somewhat heated, for the man about whom they were talking heard their drunken shouts in his cabin and suddenly walked in upon them and heard the last words :

'And if the old fellow will have none of it, then we'll make him ! He can do what the devil he likes to us.'

Furious, Kidd rushed at the man nearest to him and, as it happened, it was his gunner, William Moore.

'And how will you manage that, you rascal ?'

To which Moore answered quietly :

'Quite easily, we will invite the captain from yonder to join us.'

'And then ?'

'Then a few of us will row across with the boat and take on the quiet what we are not allowed to take by force.'

'A fine trick ! And you think I will agree to such a thing ? Good. He who will, let him go over there. But he'll never come back on board this ship. I'll see to that. And even if I have to chase you with guns all the way to Bombay I shall bring you to the gallows !'

Biting their lips but intimidated by Kidd's clenched fists, the conspirators separated. Kidd had again prevailed over them, and the *Loyal Captain* got off unscathed.

But mutiny was afoot on board and did not subside. Kidd saw by their surly faces that they no longer respected him, and he knew by their insolent replies that at the most they looked upon him as their equal or as, according to pirate custom, a leader in action and at any other time as an accomplice. What then had become of the well-beloved captain ? He shuddered to think of it.

It was a month after his encounter with the *Loyal Captain* that one day William Moore stood on deck working at the whetstone. And Kidd went up to him and said, one does not know whether it was in jest or in earnest :

‘ Well, did you succeed in forcing the old fellow ? ’

Moore took him seriously and shouted that he had never said such a thing.

‘ A pity you never tried then, you lousy knave ! ’

At this, Moore protested that if they were all lousy it was only Kidd’s fault, since he had brought them into such a miserable condition. Kidd lost control of himself, picked up an iron-rimmed bucket and hit the gunner over the head with it. Moore fell at once. Two sailors moved him to his quarters and laid him down unconscious on a bunk. The ship’s doctor, Bradingham, was called and after examining him discovered that his skull was cracked.

The next day Moore died.

By now Kidd had completely lost control over his crew. They openly showed their opposition. His life was becoming almost unsafe. To add to it, there was the complete fruitlessness of the voyage, for the capture of the Moors had yielded nothing more than sacks of pepper and coffee. Apart from that he had not found anything, neither pirates nor Frenchmen. He had only frittered his employers’ money away and had kept his men in suspense with empty promises. If he had actually come across a pirate would he have dared to attack him with such fellows ? In this distress he had a good idea : he would accost larger ships, perhaps even European ships, without, at all events outwardly, being held culpable. In those days most of the merchant vessels carried on board the flags and papers of different countries and changed them about as occasion demanded. If they were being chased by an English ship, then they showed the English flag and when boarded handed over an English pass, and if a French ship was after them they played the same game but this time with French colours and documents. Thus there was always the chance of avoiding a ship which was on the look-out for prizes. Kidd wanted to make use of this stratagem.

He decided to hunt under the French flag. Then he would perhaps chase some vessel who, to get rid of him, might be compelled to fly the French flag and hand over to him a French pass. He did not need anything else, for he held his commission against the French. He could then capture it as a prize.

At first he tried this with an Indian ship, the *Louparelle*, and promptly received a French pass. This was followed by some insignificant Moors and then finally by a magnificent capture of a 500-ton ship, the *Quedah*, again with a French pass, although the ship belonged to Armenian merchants and was under the command of an English captain. A splendid prize, laden with goods to the value of over half a million dollars. Some of the Armenians were on board and had amongst their personal luggage some sacks full of money and jewels. There was no need for further booty. The journey was ‘ made ’. The only trouble now was to turn the plunder into ready money. They did this during the following weeks through the natives and smugglers on the coast, which brought in £12,000. This was immediately divided, whereby Kidd pocketed forty shares for himself.

He now left the coast of Malabar. It was high time, for a Dutch fleet was after him. He sailed back towards Madagascar. The passage was none too pleasant. The *Adventure* leaked so violently that it took eight men to work the pumps hourly so as to keep her afloat. In the middle of the ocean she would literally have split asunder had they not fastened her together with ropes like a bundle of planks. For all that, they expected her to sink from under their feet and were always in readiness to move over to the *Quedah*, which they were towing along with them as ‘ good ’ prize.

In April 1698 Kidd arrived at Mary Island.

As he ran into the roadstead here, he at last caught sight of his coveted pirates, a great number of ships, who, however, never thought of taking flight but on the contrary hoisted the Jolly Roger and welcomed him with a thunderous volley. One of them, a well-known rover called Culliford, captain of a stolen East Indian ship, the *Mocha*, even visited him and welcomed him as comrade. And Kidd took the outstretched hand. With protestations of friendship and revelries a time of festivity went by and the only trouble was that the greatest number of Kidd's men left him, went over to Culliford and one day vanished with him to set off for the Red Sea. Later on, Kidd tried to pretend that it was not he but these mutineers who had fraternized with Culliford and had taken half of his ship's inventory, his papers, instruments and guns, and had left him in the lurch. The truth of the matter probably lay ' between the two '. Kidd spoilt matters from both sides. He behaved neither as a true pirate chief nor as a good captain, and thought he could whitewash the truth. Above all, and apart from his rough ways, what separated him from his men was the fact that he wanted to return to New York, for he felt certain that he could extricate himself from the whole affair on the strength of his manœuvres and with the help of his influential employers, by throwing the whole of the blame on to his crew. They guessed this and were not going to lay themselves open to it.

And now to return to London.

Kidd had been gone two years and the gentlemen who had appointed him waited in vain for news. At first there were all sorts of rumours abroad. As another year passed and they still did not hear anything from him, the people involved in the enterprise became anxious and suspected that something was amiss. Then the first signs of a great crash came from the East and finally the crash itself. The East India Company raised a public complaint in London on behalf of the plundered merchants of the *Quedah*.

The uproar was tremendous when it was discovered that the ruling Whig Cabinet of Lord Somers stood behind Kidd. 'A fine disgrace ! The Lord Chancellor, the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State, and Governors, the highest servants of the land had supported one of the most notorious pirates in the world and let him loose on to English seafarers and merchants ! The great Seal had been employed for Lord Belmont's private deal. The King and country were disgraced !

That was good grist for the Tory mill. Pamphlets, articles in the Press and speeches in Parliament simply rained down. Somers and his friends kept calm and proceeded methodically. First of all they openly disowned the wretched Kidd. They then prevailed upon the King to grant free pardon to all pirates and expressly excepted Kidd and Avery, and sent instructions to Belmont that in the event of Kidd landing in America he should be arrested at once. This was an energetic measure, which for the time being allowed the scandal to subside. It was evident that before conclusive judgement could be passed on the highest dignitaries of the land the pirates would need to be first in their power and then tried.

In the meantime Kidd quite unsuspectingly was on Mary Island. Thirteen men had stayed with him, and he could not set out on his voyage with only these few. Then he succeeded in finding some passengers who would work in return for their passage. With these men he sank the *Adventure*, which had become quite unseaworthy, and with those who were left he set sail for America on the *Quedah*.

On the 1st of April 1699 he landed at Anguilla, near to Porto Rico, and for the first time he heard of the events in London. He wanted to buy provisions here, but the inhabitants refused to have any dealings with the outlaws. He fared no better at St. Thomas. It was only at Curaçao through the mediation of an English merchant, Henry Bolton, that he was able to get some victuals. If Kidd had been a genuine freebooter of the old school, he would have known by now that things were hopeless and that he should throw in his lot with the Jolly Roger. But in reality he was no more than a disappointed bourgeois, who wanted to mend his fortunes by foul means. All he wanted now was to get home, in the hope that through the help of powerful friends and duplicity he could vindicate himself. But he knew that he had to be careful not to lose both his life and his plunder at one and the same time. First he sent away the *Quedah*, which he left with the greatest part of its freight under the charge of Bolton in a small harbour. He then bought a sloop and sailed on this with his own personal share of the plunder towards New York.

In Oyster Bay, by Long Island Sound, he entered into correspondence with a New York barrister, who specialized in the defence of pirates. The barrister sent him with a letter to Lord Belmont who was at that time in Boston. In this letter he admitted certain irregularities, but he asserted, however, that he had fallen a victim to mutineers. He had kept most strictly to his commissions. His prizes, as well as the *Quedah* about which there was such an uproar, were legitimate. He added as proof the two French passes that had fallen into his hands. This was a most foolish move as it later turned out.

On account of the political scandal following Kidd's appearance, the noble Lord had long since prepared a scheme which aimed at bringing the pirates to justice, but also at saving what could be saved of the plunder. He therefore drew up a kind reply which closed with the words: 'If your matter is as clear as you assert, then come here unafraid, equip a ship and bring the prize hither. I do not doubt for a moment that you and your men, inasmuch as you have remained faithful, will obtain the King's pardon, and I assure you by my word of honour that I shall behave as I promise.'

Kidd saw full well how doubtful such a guarantee was—'If your matter is as clear!'—but he did not want to turn back. Nevertheless, he started making fresh safeguards for himself. He now left behind his personal share of the booty, with a farmer called Gardiner on Gardiner's Island, from whom he begged permission to be allowed to store two boxes and a number of bundles and bales, which he would fetch away later.

Then he set off for Boston.

Despite his friendly letter, Belmont avoided any personal meeting with him and saw Kidd for the first time before the Boston Town Council where he was to vindicate himself. The main question concerned the *Quedah*. Kidd was to tell them where the ship and the plunder were hidden. He did not want to let his trump card out of his hand so long as his life and possessions were not guaranteed. Lord Belmont would not and could not give him such a guarantee on account of the political situation.

There was a great scandal, and the end of the story was that Kidd and his men, as many as could be captured, were imprisoned.

At the same time Kidd's store on Gardiner's Island was seized. This is the foundation of the story of Kidd's romantic treasure which inspired Poe and which is sought for on the island even to-day by many romantic people. Since this treasure is the only example of its kind, we give its contents here. It comprised : 206 bars of silver, 2 sacks of silver bars, 2 silver candlesticks, 1 silver dish, 3 silver jewel-boxes (among them one with diamond medallions), a diamond ring and 1 loose diamond, 1 sack of silver rings and all kinds of precious stones, 1 sack of silver buttons, 1 sack of broken silver, 2 sacks of gold bars, 9 sacks of gold dust, 1 sack of gold and silver coins, 1 gold piece, 20 dollars, 2 pieces of eight, 9 English crowns, 76 large and small rubies, 2 greenstones, 1 large piece of magnetic iron ore, 1 sack of unpolished precious stones, namely a piece of crystal, a cornelian, 2 agates and 2 amethysts. Further in goods : 57 sacks of sugar, 17 bales of linen, 87 rolls of silk, 60 pieces of cotton cloth and muslin, and 41 bales of colonial produce of all kinds.

Of course the sacks containing the precious stones and the gold should not be thought of as being the size of sugar sacks, or the bars of gold and silver as being very massive, for they were no bigger than a finger.

The pirates were not tried in Massachusetts, but were conveyed to London. At the beginning of the year 1700, Kidd and nine of his men set out for England. On the very day of their arrival Parliament, who required Kidd's evidence against Somers and his friends, was prorogued so that they had to sit in the Old Bailey for months on end before their trial was heard. As Parliament met again in the autumn the political battle began. The points at issue did not concern Kidd and his wretched pirates or the injured Armenians or the hidden booty, but the main question was the overthrow of the Government. The Tories brought out their heavy guns. The Commission concerning the pirates was shown to be an insult both to King and country, and death to all trade or property. How could one assign booty, which had been taken from pirates, to a third party? Pirates were thieves, and stolen goods were and remained the property of the person from whom they were stolen. Through whom then should the injured parties seek redress in such a case as this? The Lord Chancellor? That meant Lord Somers, a shareholder in the enterprise with an investment of £1,000. The Court of Admiralty? Orford was the president. The King? His only approach was through Shrewsbury. In the Colonies? Belmont governed there. All of them were claimants to the spoil. The only judge as to what belonged to the proprietors or not was Captain Kidd.

So the scandal raged. When the final sitting of the court took place on the 6th of December no one would have anything to do with Somers.

But lo! before the voting took place, one honourable gentleman after another disappeared from the room and the result was 189 votes against 133 for the motion 'that the conversion of the property of the imprisoned pirates to Lord Belmont was not an illegal act, since this was guaranteed to Kidd in the Commission'. The result was not particularly satisfactory and the Government soon withdrew it, but their honour was saved.

And Captain Kidd was released. The lawsuit which followed was a farce. The proceedings against the pirates were hurried over. But the case against Kidd put the finishing touch to it all. The leaders of justice in England at that time were summoned against him and his satellites, whilst they were not allowed any defence. The witnesses for the Crown were two of the most evil fellows out of his crew, a certain Palmer and Doctor Bradingham. That they might be certain of bringing him to the gallows he was first tried for the murder of his gunner, Moore. There is no denying it was an abominably brutal deed. But in these days men did not make much fuss about such things at sea, especially when it was a question of maintaining authority. One thinks involuntarily of Drake and Doughty. Also at the worst it was manslaughter, not murder. However, Kidd was found guilty. The second accusation concerned piracy and both he and his men were condemned for piracy.

As the president of the court pronounced the sentence, Kidd protested once more :

'My lord, it is a very hard sentence. I am the most innocent man in the world brought to ruin through unscrupulous rascals.'

By 'unscrupulous rascals' he meant Palmer and Bradingham. It would have been nearer the mark had he looked elsewhere.

The condemned men were hanged on the 24th May 1701.

For his last journey Kidd had thoroughly soaked himself in rum. He told the chaplain he had nothing to confess. As he was strung up, the rope snapped and the execution was delayed for an instant, which gave the servant of the church another opportunity to approach him. Kidd turned angrily away and asked the hangman to dispatch him quickly.

A few days after the execution the bodies were taken down from the gallows, treated with tar and hung up in chains at Tilbury on the banks of the River Thames, where they were seen for many years by incoming and outgoing ships, and the old hands used to point them out as a warning to impudent young cabin-boys :

'There swings Captain Kidd ! Take heed !'

The corpse swinging by the Thames has long since been taken down, but Kidd is remembered in legend and folk-song, and one of these contains the following verse :

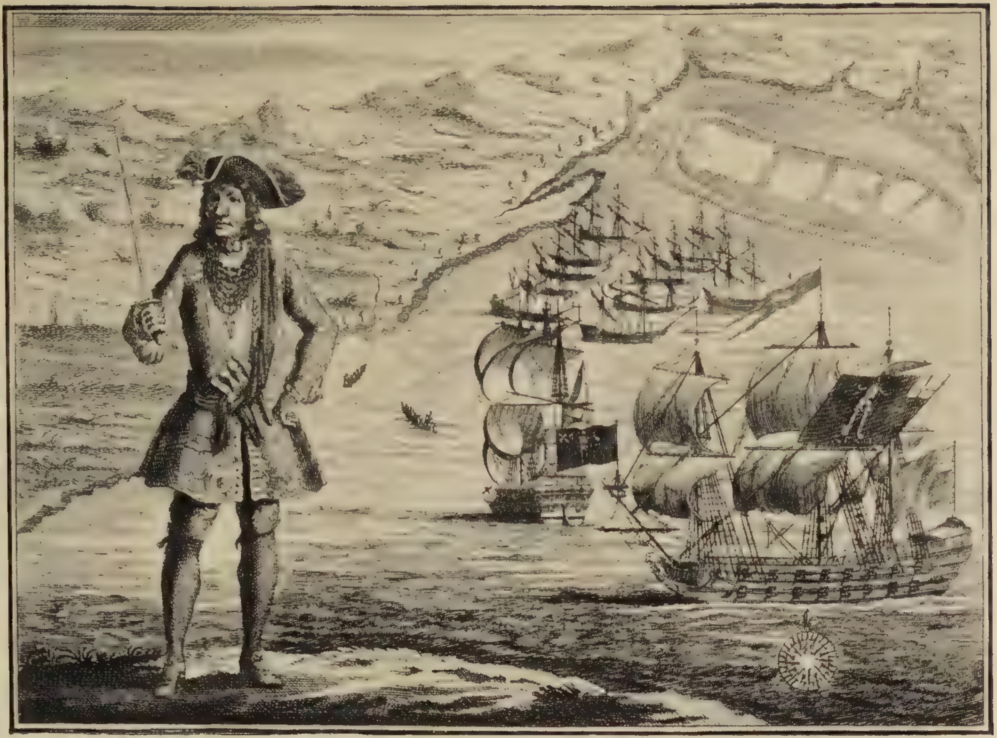
My name was Robert Kidd, when I sailed,
    when I sailed,
My name was Robert Kidd, when I sailed,
My name was Robert Kidd,
God's laws I did forbid,
And so wickedly I did, when I sailed.

CHAPTER XIII

CAPTAIN ROBERTS

CAPTAIN ROBERTS was the last of the great freebooters and undoubtedly the greatest of them all. If Henry Morgan was called the King of the Buccaneers, then Roberts should by rights be called the King of the Jolly Roger, for he held the record by far. He captured no less than four hundred ships.

We know nothing of his youth and early voyages except that he was born about 1682 in the neighbourhood of Haverfordwest and was a Welshman like Morgan, Davis, and so many other pirates. When he was captured by Davis on the west coast of Africa he was in the late thirties—a tall, dark and well-groomed man. A fanatical advocate of temperance, he condemned rum and its consequences and preferred to sip weak tea all day long. He also abominated cards, dice, betting and the society of women—thus everything which went to the making of the Jolly Roger's reputation. And he was as pious as the blessed Hawkins. He observed the Sabbath like a true Puritan. He was inclined to great outbursts of anger, but in moments of danger he behaved calmly and with presence of mind. He was as humane towards his prisoners as his calling allowed, he pressed no one into his service against their will, and nearly always returned a ship to the captain after plundering it. Between himself and his crew, however, he maintained a sharp division, and for this reason he held his command for four whole years, which is longer than any other famous pirate. It is difficult to reconcile his puritanical severity of character with an unusual propensity for wearing fantastic clothing. He dressed most grandly and loved bright scarves, magnificent plumed hats and costly weapons, for he was a truly romantic dandy. His flags were a selection of drastic symbols of his calling.



CAPTAIN BARTHOLOMEW ROBERTS
WITH TWO SHIPS, 'THE ROYAL FORTUNE' AND 'THE RANGER'
From an Engraving by B. Cole

He had sailed for only six weeks under Davis when Davis was mortally wounded and died during an attack on the island of Principe.

The election of a new captain followed, and an account of it is given which closely adheres to the description given in 1728 by Captain Johnson:

'There were three or four aspirants for the post and as usual they were the noisiest and most aggressive men, who had known how to keep in the foreground while Davis was alive, and for this reason were called "Lords" by the rest of the crew. They were Sympson, Ashplant, Anstis, and Dennis. These four formed a conclave in the captain's cabin, called for a bowl of punch and proceeded to choose.

'My "Lord" Dennis spoke first:

'"Most honoured gentlemen," he began, "actually it is of little consequence whom we honour with the title, for in truth all good governments like ours have supreme power resting in the community who can depute and revoke as they wish. We, therefore, who are gathered here and all the rest of us are in reality our own masters. Should a captain be so impertinent as to exceed his authority then down with him! (Hear! Hear!) That will have a good effect on his successors, who would then be more careful. But since we must now—while we are sober—choose a man who is first a brave fellow, secondly a good seaman, and, thirdly, a wise man who will do that which will most benefit our community, namely, one who will know how to protect us from the dangers of an unstable element and the fatal consequences of anarchy, I propose Roberts, for I believe him to possess all our esteem and trust."

'All approved. The only dissentient was "Lord" Sympson, who, having held secret expectations, pulled a long face and muttered:

'"It's all the same to me whom you choose as long as he isn't a papist. I can't abide those fellows!"

'His father had suffered in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion.

'It was thus with the "Lords". The "Commons" had not much left to say and Roberts was elected. He did not seem to be too elated at his promotion, and when he received the news he said with his usual calmness :

' " When one has stepped into the mud and become a pirate then it is always better to be a captain than a common man. I accept." '

Having caused all sorts of disturbances on the island of Principe to avenge Davis's death, the company cruised along the coast of West Africa under Roberts's leadership. They captured little booty, however, and conceived the adventurous plan of sailing over to Brazil, whose hunting fields were probably richer. After sailing for twenty-eight days they saw standing up out of the waves the bare rocks of Fernando Noronho, where they anchored and made their ship, the *Rover*, ready for the hunt.

Then they cruised for about nine weeks along the South American coast, keeping out of sight of land where the largest sailing vessels lay and without sighting a single sail. They then went close in to shore so as to sail along the coast to the West Indies and to take in water and victuals as opportunities occurred. Again for a long time they saw nothing but sea and desolate coasts until they reached San Salvador, which at that time was the chief port for the whole of Brazil. They found the whole of the Portuguese South American fleet riding at anchor off the Bay of Los Todos Santos, forty-two merchant ships lying deep in the water, which showed they were heavily laden and ready to sail for Lisbon. The ships were apparently waiting for two convoys which were riding at anchor in the bay.

At first the pirates were more surprised than pleased, for what could they do against so many ? On the other hand Roberts saw something had to be done. His men were sulky and mutinous. He had to show them that he was worthy of his command. The unsuccessful voyage had already lasted too long. He surveyed the picture before him minutely and weighed the possibilities. He decided to dare the impossible.

He prowled round them cautiously like a hungry wolf and then sailed close to them and mingled inconspicuously among them. Suddenly, he swept down upon the one nearest to him and ordered the captain to come on board.

The captain was so horrified to see the guns trained on him and the drawn swords of the men, that he obediently did what he was told.

'As you see, Captain, we are "gentlemen of fortune", so be quick and show me which of the ships is carrying the richest cargo. If you do this, then you shall get away safely. If not, then we shall kill you all!'

The choice was not difficult. He pointed out a giant with at least 40 guns and 150 men on board, but he did not refrain from giving Roberts a warning. This did not disturb the rogues in the least.

'They are only Portuguese!' they answered, and immediately steered away from him.

When they had come within hail of their prey, Roberts called out to the captain:

'Hallo! Captain, how are you?'

'Thank you, quite well.'

'Please have the goodness to come across to me. I have something important to tell you.'

'With pleasure, just wait a minute.'

This answer was accompanied by a confused bustle, through which rang excited and suppressed orders. The deck of the Portuguese vessel filled with men and the pirates saw that they had been discovered.

Roberts did not delay any longer. He allowed the enemy to get into a good position and then rammed her with all his might. The battle was short and bloody. Two pirates fell, and many of the Portuguese. Then she was boarded.

In the meantime, the fleet had grown lively. Sails were hoisted, signal flags went up, shouts and whistles echoed over the water. A few guns were discharged to give an alarm to the convoys, who were still riding at anchor, and this spurred the pirates to hurry, for their plan depended on speed. They worked feverishly to set the prize afloat, which was not so easy to do, for she was a clumsy ship and was heavily laden.

However, they soon got away and steered for the open sea under heavy fire.

The convoys had also gradually moved out and were preparing to follow the pirates, but only slowly, and one of them was soon left behind. The other sailed faster and caught up with Roberts, for he was only able to sail slowly on account of the prize and was finally compelled to heave to. As soon as he saw the Portuguese approaching he resigned himself to make slow headway.

The Portuguese captain, on discovering that the pirates had prepared for battle, stopped his ship and pretended he was waiting for his colleague. And he lay thus for a time under the pirate's nose until the latter had finished his work and sailed out to sea. The man-of-war dared not follow.

There was no limit to the rejoicing and derision on board the pirate ship. They had been successful. The ship was richly laden with sugar, hides, and tobacco, and apart from that they found 40,000 gold moidores, a mass of gold and silver chains, many precious stones and other jewels. The most valuable of all was a golden cross set with diamonds, a present from the colony for the King of Portugal.

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The pirates did not stop until they reached the coast of Guiana, where they found a Dutch settlement at the mouth of the Surinam river. Here they were able to dispose of their goods straightway. They enjoyed life for a few weeks until most of them had empty pockets, and then again they looked out towards the horizon, but Roberts did not attempt to pursue the voyage for the present. They were short of sufficient victuals for any lengthy voyage and the Jolly Roger's sensible motto was, 'No adventure to be made without belly timber'.

Then one day there fell into their hands a sloop, whose captain told them that he came from Rhode Island and that he had sailed almost all the voyage in the company of a brigantine, which was laden with provisions. This was good news for our pirates, and Roberts ordered a look-out to be kept day and night for the ship. And one evening it was really sighted.

The recently captured sloop was immediately cleared for action, because it was nimbler than the *Rover* and the Portuguese prize. Roberts entrusted the command of both these vessels to a certain Kennedy, who had distinguished himself on Principe, while he, together with some forty volunteers, set off in pursuit of the brigantine. He was certain that he would bring her back with him the following day, and he had not therefore troubled in his hasty departure about water or provisions for a longer time. But when morning came he had to recognize that he had not sailed any nearer to the ship, and on the next day the distance between them seemed to be even greater. The vessel he was chasing had smelt a rat and had sailed off in all haste. But Roberts swore he would catch up with her. As they had sacrificed another day it now became a point of honour not to return without the prize. For eight days they chased after the ship until one morning she had disappeared altogether.

Then they found that they were thirty miles too far to leeward and they had only their empty bread boxes and water barrels to look at until they could return to the other ships. There was nothing else to do but to send back the only boat they had in tow and order the other ships to join them.

For five days they waited for the boat to return. Then at last they sighted it and rejoiced. But what a disappointment ! The men had only brought scanty provisions and the most unwelcome piece of news—Kennedy had sailed away with both ships and the whole of the plunder.

Kennedy met his end on the gallows. But Roberts and the other swindlers had to begin again. At first, they pirated in the West Indies, where once they were so driven into a corner by men-of-war from the Barbados and Martinique, that Roberts could only think of those two islands with mixed feelings and swore a solemn oath to sink every ship from there without any consideration. It was then that he had the already mentioned Jolly Rogers prepared, which portrayed him as standing straddle-legged on two skulls with the letters ' A. B. H.' and ' A. M. H.' painted underneath which meant 'A Barbadian's Head' and 'A Martinician's Head'. Driven out of the West Indies, the gang shifted its field of action to the shores of Newfoundland and New England, where they plundered vessels in a terrible fashion.

The whole of the North American trade came to a standstill, for the pirates spared nothing. Powerful ships sailing to Europe and small fishing boats belonging to the English, French, and Dutch were captured by them without any discrimination whatever. They marched on to defenceless places on the coast to the sound of drum beating and the blare of trumpets, and they chased the inhabitants, plundered the houses and set fire to harbour buildings and ships. From Newfoundland they turned back to the West Indies and from there across the Atlantic to the Cape Verde Islands, which they did not reach because they had sailed too far to leeward through stupidity and want of judgement. So back they sailed to the West Indies without food or water, which cost many of them their lives. They appeared now here, now there, by the Antilles or the Bermudas, for Roberts's tactics were to disappear at once after striking a blow. He was able to seize a solitary and unsuspecting sailer on account of his superior strength and then he would hurry out of the way of pursuit.

The reputation of these knights of the Death's Head spread over the whole of the Atlantic and struck fear and terror into the hearts of all the merchants and settlers, but less among the sailors, for there was many a man among them who secretly wished he were a member of this famous gang that reigned supreme over the roadsteads of the ocean. The villains won fresh adherents from almost every prize, so that they soon could reckon their number as being some 290 men. If anyone had examined this society at close quarters he could easily have seen that like all ships flying the Jolly Roger they sailed on worm-eaten planks, and the only pity was that their opponents could not put up a better fight. Above all, there was the fact that few of the pirates were ever sober. The enormous number of prizes they made provided them with such an incredible amount of rum and sugar that there was never an end to punch drinking. It is true that Roberts the abstainer attempted to create an improvement in this and ordered all lamps and lights to be out by eight o'clock at night, but they drank all the more in the dark and were rowdy on deck. Roberts had no power to control their drinking, for by the old freebooters' law every man had the right to swallow as much as he thought fit. The weakest point, however, was the discipline. Roberts seems to have enforced his rule with the help of the ' Lords ', who had put him in power after Davis's death so that they might themselves rule through him. They always brought his refractory crew to reason for him. Many of the younger fellows were continually finding fault with his command, especially because he was fond of withdrawing himself and did not drink with them, and because he generally left the plundered ships to their captains and never forced anyone under his flag.

In 1721 Roberts sailed again over to Africa, and in June he landed at the mouth of the Sierra Leone river, near to an English factory where some thirty former buccaneers were trafficking in slaves and ivory. Here he heard disquieting news. Two men-of-war, the *Swallow* and the *Weymouth*, had put in here only a short time ago and were now scouring the coast from north to south in search of pirates, especially for Roberts and his gang. At first, he would have liked to return to the West Indies, but he feared the long voyage, also the danger was not immediate. The freebooters, therefore, enjoyed life on shore and cleaned and refitted their ships.

Six weeks later they were on their way southward and behind the warships. Roberts's plan was to put in where they had just left. He heard that the men-of-war had left Sierra Leone a month ago and that they did not intend to be back before Christmas. He could now plunder undisturbed and receive constant information about the enemy's movements.

The voyage was a great success. The Sierra Leone coast, the pepper coast, the gold coast, the slave coast were all studded with settlements of almost all the European peoples. The sea traffic was equally lively, for East Indian vessels, Guinea traders, slave ships, privateering vessels all sailed up and down. Roberts's gang could thus make one prize after another on this much-frequented coast. They molested one settlement after another, burning and pillaging everywhere, and they were always victorious. Experience, the result of many years of pirates' practice, helped them. They usually surprised the ships in the roadstead while most of the officers and crew were ashore. If there were heavy firing from forts they would answer it by bombarding the sheds and harbour buildings, so that the defenders often thought they fared better when they left the corsairs alone. The damage then was only half so severe.

Sometimes the crew of a captured vessel would meet them half-way. This happened in Cestos where the *Onslow* of the African Society lay at anchor. Their crew, together with the whole ship and a number of soldiers, went over to the pirates as soon as their officers were ashore.

Thus Roberts pirated undisturbed down the whole of the coast as far as Anna Bom, from where he returned back to the Gold Coast on the assumption that both men-of-war of which they had received warning had meantime sailed north. He touched shore by Cape Appolonia, where the English sailer *King Solomon* fell into his hands, and the very next day he captured a Dutch vessel on whose captain he played a mischievous trick. He found that the glutton had a whole poultry yard on board, and a chain of fat sausages which his careful wife had given him for the long voyage. He wrung the hens' necks and had them roasted and served up to him for dinner to which he invited the benevolent Dutchman. That the Dutchman might cut a fine figure amid so distinguished a company they hung the chain of sausages round the neck of the guest who then looked like a mayor of Schlaraffia. Then Roberts toasted him and his Guinevere. In the end the whole of his gang was drunk, and Roberts took his hymn-books out of a drawer and sang bowdlerized hymn tunes and the latest French street songs so that the man, 'although a Dutchman, was most scandalized'.

After this they sailed eastwards to pay a visit to the English settlement Whydah, the chief export place of the whole coast for gold, where ships were to be found in large numbers. Flying the 'Jolly Roger', Roberts put in to the harbour and chanced upon a whole swarm of merchantmen who surrendered to him in a body. The vessels were empty, so the pirate could only obtain ransom from them. He received eight pounds of gold dust for each prize. A small sailer, the *Porcupine,* was the only one not to be ransomed, and yet it had a full cargo of slaves who were squatting in the hold chained two and two together Roberts sent a boat over to release the negroes and then to set the prize on fire. At that moment a letter was brought over to him, which had been found on one of the prizes and which contained most disturbing news, namely that the *Swallow* might run into the harbour at any moment. The news acted on the pirates like a clap of thunder. Roberts immediately gave orders for the men to weigh anchor, and in the haste the boat which had been sent to the *Porcupine* to take the negroes ashore did not have time to do this, but set the whole ship alight, together with its living freight.

The cries of the poor victims were terrible as they leapt shackled together out of the flames into the sea. Their cries echoed loud and shrill out to sea as the corsair sailed off through the thick smoke of the darkly burning ship.

This was the rascals' last outrage. Justice was on their track. Both men-of-war had sailed only as far south as Principe and they were so visited by fever there that they had lost about 100 men. Thus it happened that the *Weymouth,* which had suffered most, made for Cape Coast Castle, the most important English fort on the Gold Coast, where her crew might rest. Meanwhile, the *Swallow,* under Captain Chaloner Ogle, sailed alone along the coast to the north, where he learnt from passing ships what had been happening. He altered his course at once and sailed back to Cape Coast Castle. Here alarming reports had streamed in from all sides and the Governor had sent news to Whydah to warn the factory there. It was this very letter which the pirates had captured. Chaloner Ogle stayed for a few hours in the harbour which the *Weymouth* had just left with another commission, and then set off alone in search of the pirates. It was clear that they had sailed off to Whydah, but the *Swallow* was delayed twice on the way and by the time she reached Whydah, Roberts had already slipped away.

And now the chase continued down the coast. Wherever Ogle made inquiries the pirates had only just disappeared, until he lost all trace of them.

Then Ogle resolved to sail at least as far south as Cape Lopez where ships often took in water.

Three days later he was near to the headland, and there in the middle of the night the men on the *Swallow* heard a cannon shot. The next morning Ogle and his men saw the Cape gleaming and below it three ships, which, according to description, were none other than Roberts's pirate dragons: the *Royal Fortune*, the *Ranger*, and a transport ship.

The captain realized at once that he could not approach the pirates so easily. They were lying behind a brightly shining sand-bank as secure as if they were behind a wall.

Ogle turned seaward to sail round the bank. And this manœuvre caused Roberts, who had long ago sighted the new-comer, to make entirely false conclusions. He mistook the man-of-war, which was cautiously not flying a flag, for a merchant vessel and as he thought it was escaping him he sent the *Ranger* in pursuit.

He could not have done Ogle a better turn, for he now made a virtue of necessity and calmly allowed himself to be chased until he was far out at sea and so far out that Roberts would scarcely be able to hear the guns. There he purposely made a clumsy manœuvre so that the pursuers might come up with him.

Unsuspecting, the pirate ran straight into the trap, hoisted the Jolly Roger at firing range and discharged the first shot.

Then the portholes of the imagined East Indies vessel were opened and a salvo crashed out over the pirates, who realized with horror what a mistake they had made. As usual, the villains lost courage. Was it through a shot or was it intentional that the Death's Head vanished from the mast? Their guns were silent and disorder seemed to break out on board. No orders were carried out, and they were probably holding another council to decide whether they were to fight or not, but when they realized they would have to fight they hoisted the flag again and opened fire.

Out of consideration for his men, Ogle wanted to avoid a battle at close quarters and continued the heavy firing, with the result that the pirates' artillery was soon completely silenced and no one showed himself on deck.

In the end he shot their main-mast overboard.

Then the black flag went down for the second time and the pirates surrendered.

Ogle sent across a boat, packed full of armed men, which cautiously approached the *Ranger*. A rope was thrown out to them and they clambered up the rope-ladder—the officers leading the way.

Hardly had the first man set foot on deck than a mighty explosion shook the vessel. Dense powder smoke enveloped them, and splinters and all manner of objects flew overboard. The sailors ran straight to the great cabin from which thick smoke was belching and there they found lying on the floor half a dozen men severely burnt. The explosion had miscarried, it had only hurt the originators. The cabin had not even caught fire.

Ten of the pirates were killed outright and there were twenty wounded lying on deck, among them Captain Skyrme, a Welshman, whose leg had been torn off by a shot, but despite this he had not left his post for a single minute. The uninjured prisoners, most of them young men in their twenties, were not in the least startled or depressed, but submitted to their fate with mockery and foul jests. They were clean and well-dressed in perfect white shirts, silk vests, and had real gold watches and chains. All their valuables and clothes were taken away from them, their hands and feet were fettered and they were transported to the *Swallow*. The following day Ogle ordered the *Ranger* to be scantily rigged and sent her to Principe with all the wounded on board. Then he prepared to meet the pirate chief himself, for it was to be assumed that Roberts was still near to Cape Lopez awaiting the return of his comrades.

And so he was.

Two days later Roberts was still in his old anchoring place and had been passing the time by capturing a small prize, the *Neptune*, under Captain Hill of London. The cargo was a quantity of rum and brandy, which gave the vagabonds an opportunity for a grand carousal. According to their custom, they had been making a terrible uproar all night and the following morning they were still drunk and incapable of carrying out their duties.

Roberts, as usual, had not taken part in the revel. He sat that morning taking breakfast with Captain Hill. He ate a nourishing stew and drank a quart of small beer, which he felt he could allow himself once in a way.

Then the look-out reported a sail visible immediately behind the Cape.

Roberts looked hastily towards it and signed to take no notice of it. He mistook it for either a Portuguese or a French slave ship. A few of the pirates who were still on deck joked and said it was the *Ranger*.

But a certain Armstrong, who had recently deserted from the *Swallow*, suddenly cried out :

' It's the *Swallow* or I don't know my own ship ! '

Alarm ! They sprang to arms, got the cannons ready, and tried to rouse the sleepers.

Roberts could still not believe his own eyes and cursed the excited men and called them cowards and drunkards. But he soon recognized the flag and grew uncannily pale and calm. His ship was unprepared, some of his men were blind drunk. He bit his lip and ordered Armstrong to come to him so as to ask him how the *Swallow* sailed.

' Best of all upon a wind,' was the answer. Roberts then resolved to sail away with the wind and ordered his men to hoist the sails, top the rigging and clear the deck for action. All this should have been done with lightning speed, but that was out of the question. It was impossible to fight with this drunken crew, and Roberts, therefore, intended to pass close to the *Swallow*, receive her broadside, and then try to sail before the wind, but if the guns on the man-of-war played on him so heavily that he could only proceed with difficulty, then he would run his ship aground and leave each man to save himself as best he could. If this manœuvre also failed, then he would board the *Swallow* and at a given moment blow up himself and his opponents.

He had not much faith in his plan, for most of his men could not be dragged out of their berths, and the few sober hands able to work or fight hardly counted. Then he realized that his last hour had come. ' A short life but a merry one ' had always been his motto, so he wanted to die as he had lived. He hurriedly put on his best clothes of magnificent red damask, donned his gala hat with a red peacock feather in it, and took out his largest piece of jewellery, a diamond cross on a heavy gold chain, which he hung round his neck. He threw a bandolier over his shoulder and stuck two elegant pistols in it. A few seconds later he was calmly standing at the helm, giving his orders.

And it almost seemed as if his luck were going to remain true to him. The *Royal Fortune* slowly drew up to the *Swallow* and sailed rapidly past her. Roberts steered neatly by and without much damage received the expected broadside, but she was not yet before the wind, and as Roberts gave the order to turn the sails a misfortune took place. Did the pilot refuse to act or was there no wind at that moment ? In any case, the ship got completely out of her course, which gave the well-manœuvred *Swallow* the opportunity to approach her for a second time.

And then the guns shot into her ribs with greater effect than before. The pirate was in a terrible position. There was no other alternative for him but to win or sink.

Roberts did not have to wait long for the latter.

He called loudly to his men to be of good cheer and to get ready to board the ship.

A shower of grapeshot interrupted his command.

He staggered and, deathly pale, he leant for a second against a cannon.

A sailor, Stephenson, sprang up from the helm just in time to support him, but as he did not see any wound he urged him harshly not to be weak at this decisive moment.

But the captain fell in his arms. A stream of blood spurted out of his mouth, and without a curse or a groan he was dead.

Stephenson lost his nerve; he knelt down by the side of his fallen chief and called to the others and wept. The rest of the crew were less sentimental. They seized hold of the corpse by the head and feet and flung it overboard. They threw the articles and a mass of papers out of the cabin after him just as he would have wished.

Confusion was now complete. No one had enough spirit or authority to seize the command. The 'Lords', who usually sought to shine on such occasions, were completely under the influence of the previous night's orgy. Most of them scoffingly left their places, threw away their weapons and swore that the game was up. Others sat stupidly in a corner and watched the bullets whistle ceaselessly over the deck. A few spirited fellows went for the casks of rum and toasted merrily. The orderly remainder of the crew debated what they should do, and suddenly one of them was seen rushing to the powder room with a burning slow-match, but others immediately ran after him and stopped him. At that moment the top-mast of the great mast came down with a loud crash and threw sails and rigging over the deck and buried the Jolly Roger beneath them. That was the end.

Not one of the pirates surrendered, but also not one of them fired.

A boat from the *Swallow* approached bristling with weapons; they boarded the pirate ship and met with no resistance.

Apart from Roberts, only two other pirates had been killed, all the rest—150 hearty young fellows and among them

45 negroes—stood about grinning stupidly and willingly allowed themselves to be taken prisoner.

The boat went to and fro and transferred them all on board the *Swallow* and each time a fresh batch was taken to the gunroom a wild howl of delight came from the whole gang as they found their comrades from the *Ranger* sitting under bolt and padlock.

Challenor Ogle then sailed to the place where the *Royal Fortune* had anchored and where the transport ship belonging to the pirates, the *Little Ranger* as they called her, was riding at anchor. She was completely abandoned and remarkably empty in cargo and stores. The reason soon became clear. Good Captain Hill, who realized that he was free of the pirates in so unexpected a manner, rapidly took unto himself his own goods and chattels which had been stored on his ship, as well as a mass of others that did not belong to him, and he had sailed off without waiting for the arrival of his saviours.

The *Swallow*, delighted at her own splendid success, let her sail on and steered toward Cape Coast Castle. The prisoners exceeded by far the number of men on the man-of-war and their place of confinement had to be particularly carefully managed. They were imprisoned in the gunroom, which was barricaded from all sides. All the men were fully dressed and had their hands and feet fettered. An officer and several men guarded them day and night. They were on short rations, so that many grew thin after the fat months they had had. Still, so long as they were together their spirits were remarkably high and they spent their time in talking and exchanging dirty jokes.

The honourable members of the upper house : Ashplant, Sympson, and others behaved so exemplarily that Ogle gave them a nigger boy as a servant. It was soon discovered that their good behaviour was only a blind to carry out a clever plan. They got the boy on to their side and promised him mountains of gold if he would help them to escape. Some, however, who did not dare to be in the plot and feared reprisals if the ' Lords ' really escaped divulged everything, but they only got a thorough good hiding with the end of a rope as their reward.

The last act of the tragedy took place in Cape Coast Castle.

A Court of Admiralty sat over 145 pirates, of whom 74 were released, 2 had their sentences postponed until the King's decision came stating whether they were to be pardoned or not, 20 were sentenced to forced labour, 17 were sentenced to prison, 32 selected, hardened youths went to the gallows.

The gallows were erected near to the colony on a hill from which there was a view far out to sea, whose terror this rabble had been for years.

And one morning the inhabitants, both white and coloured, gathered there. Sailors lined each way which led to the fort and formed a circle round the ravens' scaffold.

The 'Lords' came first: Magnus, Moody, Sympson, Sutton, Ashplant, and Hardy. They were all calm and dignified. Sutton was the only one who looked pale and dragged himself along with difficulty, but it was not out of fear, but because he was in great pain.

As the sun was burning down on them the condemned men asked the sailors to give them hats, which they put on as if they were setting out for a walk. An officer of the *Swallow* wanted to speak words of encouragement to them.

'We are poor sinners,' came the reply, 'and are to be hanged. Thousands of others deserve the same fate, but are allowed to go free. What we have done, we shall answer for before God and not before you.'

The 'Lords' were followed by the rest of the men, who were now looking pathetic.

Scudamore sang through the whole of the 31st Psalm at the gallows. Armstrong, who was to be hanged for having deserted from the *Swallow*, was content with the first three verses of the 140th Psalm.

The best speech at the gallows was made by Dunce, a young man of twenty-six. A passion for power, freedom and riches had drawn him away from the path of an honest seaman; youth and blood had led him into misery:

'Therefore, friends,' he concluded, 'abide by the word of God in your youth! Look at me! Here I stand as a beacon on a high rock to point the right way to erring seamen. Take heed!'

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